



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NEDL TRANSFER



HN 662V 9

THE  
STUDENTS' SERIES  
OF  
ENGLISH CLASSICS

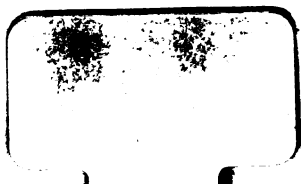
A Midsummer-  
Night's Dream

KC 6480



**Harvard College Library**

**FROM**





1299

The Students' Series of English Classics.

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY  
OF  
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

EDITED  
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES  
BY  
KATHARINE LEE BATES

WELLESLEY COLLEGE

*"Music and poesy use to quicken you"*

TAMING OF THE SHREW, I. i.



LEACH, SHEWELL, & SANBORN,  
BOSTON. NEW YORK. CHICAGO.

KC 6480  
~~13486 5230~~



Transferred from  
Education Department Library

**COPYRIGHT, 1895,**  
**BY LEACH, SHEWELL, & SANBORN.**

**TYPOGRAPHY BY C. J. PETERS & SON, BOSTON.**  
**PRESSWORK BY BEEWICK & SMITH.**

## PREFACE.

---

THIS school edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* differs but little in plan from the preceding edition of *The Merchant of Venice*. Both books aim to recognize the poetic values of Shakesperian study, and to stimulate the student to do his own thinking about the plays. The distinctive feature of the editing is to be found in the interrogative character of the notes. Information which the student could not readily obtain for himself and brief quotations of peculiarly suggestive criticism are supplied, but, more often, questions take the space usually allotted to statements of fact and opinion. The notes are divided into three groups, — textual, grammatical, and literary. The text is based upon that of the first folio, quarto readings and critical guesses being introduced only where the meaning would otherwise be obscured or the cadence seriously marred. Except in case of obvious misprints, such changes are duly recorded in the notes. The textual notes present, too, all other important quarto variations; and a few of the less impertinent emendations, in order that the student may in every significant instance make his own decision as to what Shakespeare probably wrote. If the folio text as here printed be carefully revised by teacher and



students in accordance with the suggestions of the notes, the exercise can hardly fail to impart a livelier sense of style in general, and of Shakesperian style in particular, together with something more than a hint of the processes and principles of Shakesperian scholarship. The textual work, however, is not designed for beginners. It may also be well for junior classes to pass over the grammatical notes, although students sufficiently advanced to undergo the drill in the niceties of language afforded by annotated editions of the *Anabasis* and the *Æneid* should find something to interest them in Elizabethan syntax. The literary notes refer to the two preceding sets in cases where acquaintance with a textual or grammatical discussion is essential to the appreciation of the passage. In illustration of those elfin and lyric qualities that are to the editor the chief charms of the play, the literary notes contain, together with questions on substance and form, and with more or less of the usual explanatory matter, many scattered bits of fairy-lore and snatches of Elizabethan song. It is hoped that these notes, judiciously administered, may result not only in a finer and more independent apprehension of the young poet's delectable fairy-drama, but in quickened fancy and fuller joy.

The introduction is confined to the play under discussion. For a brief sketch of Shakespeare's early life and of the antecedent growth of the English drama, with references, and for a condensed account, with references, of Elizabethan copyright and the history of

Shakesperian criticism, students may refer to the introduction of *The Merchant of Venice* in the Students' Series of English Classics.

The welcome appearance, this past summer, of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* in the "New Variorum" so ably and delightfully edited by Dr. Furness has been a cause of especial thanksgiving to the present writer, whose debt to so rich a mine of learning and wisdom may not easily be overstated.

KATHARINE LEE BATES.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE,  
October, 1896.



# CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	iii
INTRODUCTION —	
I. HISTORY OF THE PLAY . . . . .	1
II. SOURCES . . . . .	6
III. STRUCTURE . . . . .	10
IV. TREATMENT . . . . .	16
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM . . . . .	25
NOTES —	
TEXTUAL . . . . .	113
GRAMMATICAL . . . . .	129
LITERARY . . . . .	141



# INTRODUCTION.

---

## I. HISTORY OF THE PLAY.

WHEN was *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* written? Three hundred years ago nobody cared, and so to-day nobody knows. It was printed in 1600. It was mentioned in 1598. Is there any way of tracing it farther back? The Queen of Fairyland plumes herself with comical complacency on the cold, wet summer, followed by a poor harvest, which has befallen Attica (*alias* England) because of her tiny Majesty's domestic wrangle with "jealous Oberon." At this hint the scholars have ransacked Elizabethan literature, from almanac to sermon, in the effort to locate this calamitous season. The year 1595 fell under suspicion, 1597 was challenged, but the bulk of testimony points to 1594. Yet while it is quite possible that, in case the play was written and presented during an exceptionally stormy period, Shakespeare might have alluded to the bad weather, it by no means follows that poetical fogs and frosts within the theatre are proof of literal fogs and frosts without. If we knew from other sources that *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was acted in 1594, it would be sound criticism — supposing, what some critics deny, that weather and description tally — to recognize in Titania's boast, protracted as it is, a reference to the times; but the reverse does not hold good. It cannot be maintained that this much-disputed passage has established the date of the comedy. Neither

can anything more solid than conjecture be raised upon the lines, —

“ The thrice-three Muses, mourning for the death  
Of Learning, late deceas'd in beggary,”

although there may well be in these saucily syllabled verses both a reminiscence of the alliterative Spenser's somewhat despondent poem, “ The Teares of the Muses,” 1591, and, with this, a haunting, not unkindly memory of poor, brilliant, unstable Robert Greene, “ Master of Arts in both Universities,” who had worked with Shakespeare, and envied Shakespeare, and had died a profligate's death in 1592.

*A Midsummer-Night's Dream* has something the effect of a bridal masque. It is easy to see in imagination a stately Elizabethan hall thronged with applauding gentles, while the young poet, still in the dress of Lysander, receives with becoming modesty the thanks of a noble bridegroom, and bends his knee to the imperial smile of the “ fair vestal throned by the west.” Again the critics have recourse to the Elizabethan annals, and again the fruits of research are confusion and disappointment, although two weddings within the decade have excited especial interest. The Earl of Essex espoused the widow of Sir Philip Sidney in April, 1590. It was a private marriage which, when divulged, brought down upon the young husband the hot wrath of the queen. A private marriage, however, might admit of private festivities. Shakespeare was then a “ poor player ” of six and twenty, seeking a patron. There is, apparently, a loyal reference to Essex, who was three years Shakespeare's junior, in *Henry V.* (Prologue to Act V., lines 29–34), and it is probable that sooner or later the two men were personally acquainted. If the play was acted on or near May Day, the plot becomes significant, while the title,

*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, usually understood, like *Twelfth Night*, as indicating the time when the comedy was first brought upon the stage, may have been added for a later public presentation in a London theatre. The other wedding about which much wistful curiosity has played is that of the Earl of Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon in 1598. This, too, was a secret marriage, and one peculiarly unwelcome to the queen. To the Earl of Southampton Shakespeare had dedicated, in formal terms, his *Venus and Adonis* in 1593, and, this time with words of strong affection, his *Lucrece* in 1594. Neither wedding date is satisfactory. How could Shakespeare write so well in 1590? How could he write so ill in 1598?

The likelihood is that we have in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* a boyish comedy of clowns and fairies and bewildered lovers, hastily retouched and enlarged for some high occasion upon which the figures of Theseus and Hippolyta, and the exquisite flattery of the queen, had a direct bearing; but likelihood is not fact. We do not know.

There was one Francis Meres living in London at the turn of the century, a scholar younger than Shakespeare by a year, and destined for the pulpit and the ferule. He had artistic longings in him, however, and gave an unusual attention to contemporary authors, painters, and musicians of his own nation. He counted Shakespeare the best dramatist, both in comedy and tragedy, of the English stage, and it is to him we owe the precious list of Shakesperian plays known in 1598: "for comedy, witnes his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love Labors Lost*, his *Love Labours Wonne*, his *Midsummers Night Dreame*, and his *Merchant of Venice*; for tragedy, his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*."

The publishers of London were not far behind the critic in



learning of these plays, and, before 1600 was over, eight of the twelve had been issued in sixpenny quartos. In October of that year, when Thomas Heyes obtained from the Master Wardens of the Stationers' Company a license to print *The Merchant of Venice*, — already printed, perhaps without authority, by the prominent and slippery stationer, James Roberts, — Thomas Fisher registered for *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. In the same year, 1600, but probably later, Roberts, without a license, printed the play more attractively and less correctly. Fisher's edition is known as the First Quarto (Q<sub>1</sub>), and Roberts' as the Second Quarto (Q<sub>2</sub>). The third original text, that of the First Folio (F<sub>1</sub>), 1623, was taken from the Second Quarto slightly revised — apparently from a copy which had been used in Shakespeare's theatre, and into which stage directions had been somewhat minutely written. The Folio is the only one of these three texts which indicates the division into acts. It was left for later hands to mark out the scenes.

The play, in one guise or another, has held the stage ever since it was first produced. Taylor, the Water-Poet, has a gay allusion to it in 1622. It is suspected of being the comedy which brought the Bishop of Lincoln into disgrace in 1631. Scandal whispers that the prelate, with guests, had witnessed in his own house on a Sunday evening a play in which one of the characters wore an ass-head. The unlucky actor was compelled by the growing power of the Puritans to sit for twelve consecutive hours "in the Porters Lodge at my Lords Bishoppes House, with his feete in the stocks and attyred with his asse head, and a bottle of hay sett before him, and this subscription on his breast: —

'Good people, I have played the beast,  
And brought ill things to passe.  
I was a man, but thus have made  
My selfe a silly Asse.'"

In 1661 was published a droll taken from *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and entitled *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom, the Weaver*. It was evidently a popular performance, that held its own, even during the suppression of the theatres, when the strictest Puritanic vigilance could not entirely exclude such side-shows from the public fairs, nor banish their exhibition from the merry conclaves of London prentices. This droll was copied in Germany under the title of *Herr Peter Squentz*. "And thus the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges." After the Restoration, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was revived at the King's Theatre, where it had the mischance, in September of 1662, to number among its spectators Mr. Pepys. This worthy promptly confided to his famous *Diary* that it was "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life." In 1692 it was worked over into an opera called *The Fairy Queen*, in which Shakespeare's creations are supplemented by fauns and nymphs, swans and dragons, three drunken poets, four savages, six monkeys, a Chinese man, a Chinese woman, and Hymen. The eighteenth century three times tapped *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, in Leveridge's *Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, 1716; in Garrick's opera of *The Fairies*, 1755; and in Colman's afterpiece, *A Fairy Tale*, 1777.

Our own century has contributed to Shakespeare's magic comedy appreciative study, Mendelssohn's music and, on the whole, successful performances. It is true that until the elfin troops themselves

"Come from the farthest steep of India"

to join theatrical companies, the fancy of the audience must bear an active part in the representation. But why not? "The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

## II. SOURCES.

THE ostensible sources of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* divide into two main channels, — the ancient classics, and English folk-lore. For the legend of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, Shakespeare had only to go to his Latin *Ovid*, Golding's translation, or Chaucer's *Legende of Goode Women*. For the heroic figures of Theseus and Hippolyta, North's *Plutarch* or Chaucer's *Knights Tale* would furnish sufficient suggestion.

For Oberon, Titania, and the attendant fairies, not forgetting Puck, the young poet had but to remember, it is most likely, stories told by Stratford firesides and reveries under Warwickshire moonshine. Greene's *History of James IV.*, with its very dull and moral "skipjack" of a fairy king, and Spenser's high-thoughted epic may have made the sound of Oberon familiar to his ears. (See literary notes, Act II., Scene I., for names *Oberon*, *Titania*, *Puck*, and *Robin Goodfellow*.) It is, of course, quite possible, as Dr. Furness suggests, that a lost fairy-play served the young dramatist here, as rude and early work served him elsewhere; but there is nothing to substantiate the conjecture beyond Henslowe's shuffling entry of "hewen of burdokes" (for *Huon of Burdeaux*, see literary notes on *Oberon*, II., I.) which is recorded as having been acted in January, 1593.

For the true sources of the poem we must look to Stratford, London, and a young man's heart. It was the lad from the Midlands who knew so well "a bank where the wild thyme blows," who had seen "the round and orient pearls" of dew adorning "the nodding violet" and "the fresh lap of the crimson rose," and had counted the rubies set in the "gold coats" of the cowslips. It was the country-bred boy who remembered in the city din how tuneable is

“lark to shepherd’s ear,  
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear,”

who, resting on “faint primrose beds,” had drunk the woodland notes of throstle, nightingale, and wren, finch, sparrow, cuckoo, dove, and

“ousel cock so black of hue,  
With orange-tawny bill.”

In the lanes about Stratford he had gathered his fill of dewberries, from trees trained against a neighbor’s garden-wall or against the sunny side of a thatched cottage he had plucked green figs, and in a venturesome hour had, perhaps, climbed to the squirrel’s hoard, and fetched him thence “new nuts.” He knew “thorny hedgehog,” and “leathern-winged rere-mouse,” and “clamorous owl;” among the acorns of Arden his foot had chanced upon the “enamell’d skin” abandoned of the snake; he had watched many “a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle,” and had often seen

“wild geese that the creeping fowle eye,  
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,  
Rising and cawing at the gun’s report,  
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky.”

He had tried his musical skill, perhaps, on “pipes of corn,” had lingered on his way to “haunted Hillborough” or “dancing Marston,” or whatever hamlet of the neighborhood his steps might seek, to note the empty sheep-fold or the ox stretching his yoke; and we may be sure that Shakespeare was not far removed from boyhood when he reckoned among the grave disasters of the fairy-born distemperature that —

“The nine men’s morris is fill’d up with mud,  
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green  
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.”

He "with the morning's love" had "oft made sport," and  
"like a forester" trodden the groves in "the vaward of the  
day" to

"mark the musical confusion  
Of hounds and echo in conjunction,"

when with "such gallant chiding"

"The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seem'd all one mutual cry."

He had risen early, too,

"To do observance to a morn of May,"

and had, not improbably, danced with the youth of the coun-  
tryside about the famous "painted Maypole" of Welford.  
Perhaps Shottery could tell a story of his giving of rhymes  
and interchanging of love-tokens, if not of singing verses by  
moonlight at Anne Hathaway's window, and stealing

"impression of her fantasy"

with bracelets of his hair,

"rings, gauds, conceits,  
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers  
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth,"

though, indeed, poor Anne had passed her days of "childhood  
innocence."

Hermia and Helena, for all their palace setting, have the  
vigorous limbs and untutored manners of lower-class country-  
girls — such "maidens of the villagery" as Will Shakespeare  
would often have seen busy over their milk-pans, and might  
sometime have surprised quarrelling with ready nails and fists.  
Surely if Anne Hathaway courted him as Helena courted

Demetrius, he showed himself "lord of more true gentleness" than the Athenian. The "hempen homespuns" swaggered in Warwickshire; and Shakespeare may have played the hidden Puck at one of their rehearsals, or he may himself, with a group of Stratford urchins, have been a woodland actor in his own first play, using a "green plot" for stage, and a "hawthorn-brake" for "tiring-house." The housewife who turned from her churning to pour him a bowl of ale, or the wise old gossip, roasting crab-apples in the chimney-corner, told him tales of Robin Goodfellow, and pointed out half-fearfully the dewy "orbs upon the green;" and who knows but that, on some dreamy midsummer night, with "liquid pearl" decking "the bladed grass," and the odor of "sweet musk-roses" in the air, while through a "haunted grove" he sought "the close and consecrated bower" of the fairy queen, the moonbeams were fanned for an instant from his eyes, and he caught a far-away glimmer of Mustard-seed's gold cap or Cobweb's gossamer wings?

But it was in London that he found his Theseus, the man of rank and of career, half contemptuous of poetry, a careless patron of the stage, preferring farce to tragedy or to heroics, and yet so rich and strong and grand a nature that the young Shakespeare bowed his heart before it in something more like hero-worship than the dramas show again. "The spacious times of great Elizabeth" saw many a Theseus, with Romeos and Hamlets in their trains.

Hippolyta is a court lady, but Shakespeare looks upon her from a distance. As in *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Comedy of Errors*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, he does not yet understand a noble woman's heart. Hippolyta has dignity of silence, grace of speech, but little ardor, mirth, or power of personality. Theseus is too evidently her conqueror. Even

in trifles the man must have his way, and the woman must accept his assurance that she likes it better than her own.

Shakespeare's experience in the city theatres doubtless lent edge to his satire upon the all-capable, irrepressible Bottom, and the realistic devices of the stage. Many a touch of burlesque in his "most lamentable comedy" was appreciated to the full by fellow-actors and fellow-playwrights, where now, with reference-books and commentaries spread like a sea before us, we fish patiently for the jest. The very excellence of his portraiture of the rural life he had left testifies to the wider life and broader vision into which he had entered. If Stratford gave him material, London gave him art.

It is not for us to persist further and inquire curiously from what mood or what experience this young poet and young husband drew the fantasy of "love-in-idleness" that is here so daintily and derisively portrayed, — a thing airy, tricky, accidental, matter for clownish parody, the sport of elfin wags, a dream in "fairy-time." "The boy Love" might take the word from Helena and ask : —

"Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born" ?

### III. STRUCTURE.

FROM one point of view *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is a triumph of construction. The most heterogeneous fowl, — a classical hero, a Teutonic goblin, an Amazonian queen, grotesque English artisans, two brace of Athenian lovers, and the daintiest woodland fairies that ever sang lullaby with Philomel, are caught together in a moonshine net of poetry spanned with allusions to mythical demigods, mediæval nuns, Warwickshire mayers, London actors, Indian kings, French coins, Centaurs, sixpences, the Man in the Moon, Bacchanals,

heraldry, Jack and Jill, mermaids, magic herbs, swords, guns, Tartars, and the Antipodes. The elfin queen of subjects so tiny as to

“Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there”

winds in her arms the big body of a human clown. Four days so quickly steep themselves in nights, four nights so quickly dream away the time, that not all the counting of all the critics has yet righted the silver striking of the fairy clock. The waning moon is full before she is new. The play that is acted in the palace has forgotten the parts assigned in the carpenter's shop and the speeches rehearsed in the grove. The threat of death excites *Hermia* far less than the slur on her stature. Fairy sentinels nod at their posts, and the ass-head enables *Bottom* to speak the English tongue. It ought to be all a jumble, and it is an artistic harmony.

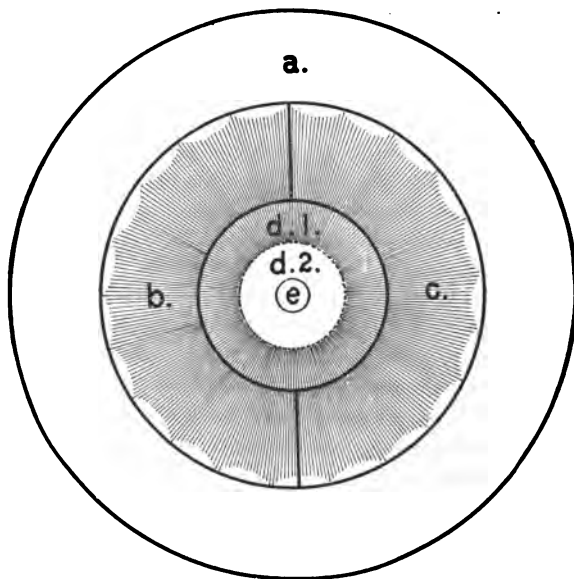
But how? What, in this that looks so helter-skelter, is the unifying truth? Here the scholars are at variance. The play is a twist of gold cord and rainbow silks, homespun yarn and shimmering moonbeams. The royal gold, it is generally agreed, binds the rest together, but does not make a part of the actual comedy-knot. Each of the other threads in turn has felt the critical tug.

“We hurry over the tedious quarrels of the lovers,” declares *Mr. Marshall* (*Irving Shakespeare*, 1888), “anxious to assist at the rehearsal of the tragi-comedy of ‘*Pyramus and Thisbe*.’ The mighty dispute that rages between *Oberon* and *Titania* about the changeling boy does not move us in the least degree. We are much more anxious to know how *Nick Bottom* will acquit himself in the tragical scene between *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*. It is in the comic portion of this play that *Shakespeare* manifests his dramatic genius.”



"The fairies are the primary conception of the piece," asserts a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* (April, 1848), "and their action the main action."

"The real centre of the plot," announces Professor Wendell of Harvard ("William Shakspeare," 1894), "is the love-story of the four Athenians."



- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| a. Theseus and Hippolyta. | d. The Fairies, the "night-rule" of Titania (1) |
| b. The Lovers.            | lying apart from that of Oberon (2).            |
| c. The Clowns.            | e. The Magic Flower.                            |

It is not difficult to see in what mutual relation the four elements stand. If a diagram may be allowed, it becomes

clear that the encompassing action is that of Theseus and Hippolyta, the human sovereigns. With the fairy element these never come into contact. The clown action touches both, and so does the action of the Athenian lovers. All the perplexities of the plot proceed from the fairies, save the cross in the loves of Helena and Demetrius, which is resolved by the fairies. The elves are thus at the centre of the comedy, although Titania has so far withdrawn herself from her wee lord, — as bent on maintaining masculine supremacy in fairy-land as Theseus is in Athens, — that she, too, undergoes the witchery of the magic juice. The web of enchantment that overspreads the play radiates from the mischievous little flower love-in-idleness, and its ready agents, the “king of shadows” and “sweet Puck.”

The contrasted features here are the waking world, the world of daylight, scepticism, reality, and the dream-world, the world of moonshine, charm, illusion. These two worlds must forever lie apart. So long as the poet observes this verity, what matter if Athens and London are shaken up together, and the classic ages masquerade in feudal dress? No elves hop in the walks and gambol in the eyes of Theseus. He gives courtly audience in palace halls, or in the crisp “vaward of the day” rides to the chase after his pack of Spartan hounds, whose

“heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew.”

If we meet the duke between “after-supper and bed-time,” he sits in the circle of the lights, smiling graciously as he classes in one category of “seething brains”

“The lunatic, the lover, and the poet.”

He takes good-humored pleasure in the absurdities of the interlude, unaware that Shakespeare may be quizzing even him, to whom the Real is the all, to whom "strong imagination" is but a thing of "tricks," in the blundering efforts after realism manifested in Wall and Moonshine.

Lysander and his sharp-tongued Hermia, Helena and her still enchanted Demetrius, touch prose-land on the side of their daily Athenian living; but their loves and their youth have made them free of the fairy-haunted wood for one long mid-summer night.

As for Bottom, he is the very creature of delusion. Self-love lays a more potent spell upon the eyelids than the infatuation even of a Titania for an ass.

The drama opens in the realm of reality. Theseus and Hippolyta, in the briefest of conversations, unconsciously strike the keynotes of moonlight, dreams, and love. With the entrance of the courtiers, the entanglements of comedy become apparent. Helena loves Demetrius. Demetrius, forsworn, loves Hermia. Hermia and Lysander love each other. Under stern penalty their loves are forbidden. They plot an escape, which Helena betrays to Demetrius. In a humble quarter of Athens, meanwhile, under constant interruption and dictation from the tragic star, Master Peter Quince is schooling his company of amateur players. The second act introduces us to quite another world. We live with spirits for our company; and although once the moonlight glades are crossed by the fleeting figures of Demetrius and Helena, and again the fragrant turf is pressed by the weary forms of Lysander and Hermia, the human world they represent has already waxed more unreal than fairyland. Upon the eyes of Lysander is thrown the power of the charm, and Helena is wrapt in angry bewilderment. With the third act the climax of confusion is

attained. Bottom wears in the sight of all the ass-head which Puck saw on him from the first; the fairies guide his boorish steps to the bower of their enamoured queen, whose flower-cradle was ill-guarded from jealousy and surprise; deep into the apple of Demetrius's eye sinks the purple juice; and the four lovers, for the delectation of roguish Puck, play out their "fond pageant" with hearts and hands and voices all striving at cross-purposes, until exhaustion constrains to rest. The fourth act brings blithe relief. That determined inch of majesty, King Oberon, his end secured, looks askance on Titania's devotion to Bottom, and deems it time to undo

"This hateful imperfection of her eyes."

Startled by the morning lark, away trip the fairies after the night's shade, —

"We the globe can compass soon,  
Swifter than the wandering moon,"

and the hunting-horns of Theseus awake the lovers. This long-bewitched quartette, their parts tunefully adjusted at last, kneel before the duke for his urbane and easy pardon, and rise, with haunting memories of agonies and raptures gone, to make ready for their weddings. Even Bottom arouses from such a dream as "the eye of man hath not heard," and, with a marked lapse in his English, hurries on the play. The fifth act, like the first, opens in the realm, not of Oberon, but of Theseus — yet with a difference. The literalism of the players parodies the realistic theories of the duke, the "very tragical mirth" of the interlude mocks the forest adventures of the lovers, and possibly Bottom himself vaguely suspects derision in the plaudits. The world of fact is never so stable and

serious again after a midsummer night in fairyland. And when, at last,

“The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve,”

and the palace is hushed and dim, frolic trippings and warbled notes and glimmering sprites bless the bridal chambers, sweeping away the impurities of life's toilsome hours, and purging man's mortal grossness yet once more with the mysteries of moonlight, dreams, and love.

#### IV. TREATMENT.

THE poet Sidney Lanier, in the richly suggestive series of papers on Chaucer and Shakespeare, published in the *New York Independent* (1891), phrases the theme of the play under consideration as the “dream-relation of youth toward the Real.”

“Let one remind one's self — to begin — how youth, or early manhood, with its debonair waving-off of the more terrible questions of existence in favor of those immediate joys which are rendered possible by the physical luxuriance of this period, succeeds for a while in maintaining toward real life an attitude of nonchalance and irresponsibility. It is, as to the Real, an amateur period. . . . Or if, indeed, the sensitive soul of a youth is impressed with the dread revelations of the underlying reality of things, it is so impressed with a saving clause — namely, with a certain curious doubt which appears to brood beneficially about our dreams. The most painful of dreams affect us but little in comparison with slight actual griefs. . . . No one's heart was ever broken by a dream. . . . It is precisely such a relation which the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* expresses in the most ravishing terms of fancy. . . .

Here we have the cross of love, — two mad for one, Oberon quarrelling with his wife, but no thought of heart-break. Here Bottom and his fellow patches show us Shakespeare conscious of the fashionable degradations of his art ; but there is no mourning over it, as in the later sonnet,

‘Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,’

and several others. Here we have the stupid ass-worship of contemporary criticism in all times, — Titania, or current applause, doting upon the absurd monster ; but it is matter for smiles only, not indignation. *Certainly, wrong is abroad, that is clear ; but meantime one is young, and this is a dream* — such appears to be the fair moral outcome of this play.”

The above is a fortunate characterization, if not of the precise theme, at least of the informing spirit of the play. In the tone there is such buoyancy of youth, such a blithesome roguery and unconcern, such uplift of pure song, that another poet, Thomas Campbell, was impelled to exclaim : “Of all Shakespeare’s works, the *Midsummer-Night’s Dream* leaves the strongest impression on my mind, that this miserable world must have, for once at least, contained a happy man.”

Who can doubt it? Happy eyes twinkled over poor little Mustardseed’s quaking obeisances before this ass-headed jester with tastes so alarmingly akin to those of “that same cowardly, giart-like ox-beef” which had devoured “many a gentleman” of the shining Mustardseed house. Happy ears hearkened to the “Lulla, lulla, lullaby” sweetly sung by fairy voices in the “spangled starlight sheen.” And it cannot be but that the poet’s lips curved into a smile over Bottom’s jocular concern lest “Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur,” be “overflown with a honey-bag.”

Mr. Pepys is in an unenviable minority among the critics

with reference to the charms of this drama. Over every sensitive mind it holds the sway of most rare poetry. The mere name, spoken by chance, in a prosaic working-hour, flashes upon "the inward eye" visions of "quaint spirits" and "moonlight revels," refreshing all the heart with beauty and with laughter. It sings through the soul like a lyric. One does not care to criticise. One rejoices and gives thanks.

The charge that is most seriously brought against the treatment is lack of individual characterization. Loyal Shakespeareans have labored to show that Demetrius is the "lack-love," the "kill-courtesy," and that Lysander, for all his fluency in taunting his swiftly soured "sweet" of an hour passed with the names of "dwarf" and "bead" and "acorn," is the frank and winsome gentleman.

It may be doubted, however, whether modern criticism really succeeds any better than Puck in its attempt to know these two apart.

"Weeds of Athens he doth wear,"

and, for the rest, it is difficult to see why Helena should not have been as well content with one as with the other, or why she should have tired her feet with running after either. The girls, too — what but the juice of that miracle-working pansy could lead a man to care whether he strolled through the silver glades with tall, fair, lovesick Helena, or shrewish, brown, little Hermia?

In answer to this objection, Professor Wendell has noted that the characterization in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is that of groups and not of individuals. We may not plainly distinguish the young Athenians from one another, or timid Starveling and shrill-voiced Flute from stupid Snout and con-

soientious Snug ; but the group of youthful lovers is outlined with brilliant distinctness as against the

“crew of patches, rude mechanicals,  
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,”

and both are a clear remove from the elfin troop on the one hand, and the heroic pair on the other.

Shakespeare might be said to here anticipate Wagner in giving to each of these groups a musical motive of its own.

The strain belonging to Theseus and Hippolyta is deep and royal. Their blank verse, sonorous and most skilfully modulated, is in the richest tone of Shakespeare's second period. No prentice hand penned that swift and vital picture of the Spartan hounds, — description by suggestion, as distinguished from the detailed enumeration in *Venus and Adonis* of the points of a good horse, — or that unsurpassed expression, coming with strange force from the sceptic and the realist, of the poetic rapture : —

“The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.”

“Sweet Bully Bottom ” and his “barren sort ” enter to the accompaniment of “the tongs and the bones.” Over the distorted prose of their puzzle-headed conferences, and the preposterous verse of their “palpable-gross play ” Shakespeare's fun runs riot. Bottom himself is one of the immortal creations of genius, — a type that will not be outworn so long as the green earth spins through space. “Now the world is possessed



of a certain big book, the biggest book on earth ; that might indeed be called the Book of Earth ; whose title is the Book of Egoism."

The music that expresses the Athenian lovers has, in general, a dulcet quality ; but here it is that we detect the uneven and often unsuccessful style of Shakespeare's very first comedies. There are scenes, notably the good-night duet of Hermia and Lysander, as sweet, almost, as the first delicious converse of Romeo and Juliet at the Capulet festival ; but over the page one encounters verse so feeble and so thin, that the wonder grows how the poet of hero-chant and fairy-roundelay could ever have suffered these mawkish lines to stand. That it was a question of sufferance seems clear. To my own thinking it is inconceivable that, at the same date, Shakespeare should have written with such ease and dignity of style as, for instance, in this quiet passage : —

"I will hear that play ;  
For never anything can be amiss  
When simpleness and duty tender it,"

and again with such crudity as here : —

"Do not say so, Lysander ; say not so.  
What though he love your Hermia ? Lord,  
what though ?"

The fairy motive is the haunting strain of the drama. There must have been a time when little Will Shakespeare believed in fairies. Perhaps the young students for whom these pages are written will bear with an illustrative anecdote. In 1890 the present writer met on the Isle of Arran a sonsy Scotch lassie, with the springiest of steps on her native turf, and the most honest of gray eyes. Cautious and canny, she

would not say that she believed or disbelieved in the fairy-lore of the island.

"I've na leukit on the wee people mysel'," she said, "an' my mither canna speak the English."

The old woman, big-capped and angry-eyed, crouched in the chimney-corner, muttering in Gaelic her detestation of the stranger who was all unconsciously smiling upon her over a toasted oatmeal cake. When we were out on the heather again, the daughter, as she grew freer of speech, explained that her mother objected to English-talking folk, because the English tongue had driven the fairies out of Arran. It seems that in her mother's girlhood the fairies would often, of a summer evening, come "oot of their holes" (compare "The Veairies" of Barnes, the Dorsetshire poet) and dance under the two old hawthorn-trees, pointed out on the edge of the little croft. But all this was long ago, before the times grew bad, and English was taught in the schools, and the old Gaelic songs were forgotten. Now the Arran fairies have "gane awa to France."

"But what was it they used to do?" the auditor asked, with a remembrance of Puck. "Milk and churn?"

"Ay, it's at their tricks they were."

"I should call it very kind in them to draw your milk and make your cheese."

"Ah, but if they keppit it!"

"Yes, if they did! But you don't truly believe these fairy-tales?"

"Na when I speak the English, but when I speak the Gaelic at hame with mither — hoots! I dinna ken."

The keen-eyed young playwright of London, with nobles and scholars for associates, touched on every side by the ample air of Elizabethan culture, practised in gay satire, had no

faith in fairies, not he — albeit half his old neighbors at home, staid Puritans though they were coming to be, would go down to their graves in Stratford churchyard with their belief in elves and goblins undisturbed. Shakespeare knew better, but the pulses of the child thrilled still in the heart of the man. Mary Arden's "sweet Will" had been a brave and trustful little fellow, not fearing the fairies with the common fear of the peasantry. The poems of Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, testify to the dread with which the rustic shunned uncanny society: —

“ When sound of fairies’ silver horn  
Came on the evening breezes borne,  
Homeward he fled, nor made a stand,  
Thinking the spirits hard at hand.  
But when he heard the eldritch swell  
Of giggling laugh and bridle bell,  
Or saw the riders troop along,  
His orisons were loud and strong.”

But as Gervinus has pointed out, Shakespeare's fairy-comedy has, once for all, cleared the little people of the evil suspicions — that so long hung over them. Puck makes fun of us, —

“ Lord! what fools these mortals be! ”

but that is the worst of Puck. And as for the flower-bright realm of Oberon and Titania, the poet Hood has taught the fairy queen a language in which to thank the bard whose genius blessed her elfin troop to an immortality of beauty: —

“ Nay, by the golden lustre of thine eye,  
And by thy brows’ most fair and ample span,  
Thought’s glorious palace, framed for fancies high,  
And by thy cheek thus passionately wan,  
I know the signs of an immortal man.

. . . . .

Nod to him, Elves, and flutter round about him,  
And quite enclose him with your pretty crowd,  
And touch him lovingly, for that, without him,  
The silk-worm now had spun our dreary shroud."

Hudson has written charmingly of Shakespeare's fairies: "They worship the clean, the neat, the pretty, and the pleasant, whatever goes to make up the idea of purely sensuous beauty; this is a sort of religion with them; whatever of conscience they have adheres to this; so that herein they not unfitly represent the wholesome old notion which places cleanliness next to godliness. Everything that is trim, dainty, elegant, graceful, agreeable, and sweet to the senses, they delight in: flowers, fragrances, dewdrops, and moonbeams, honey-bees, butterflies, and nightingales, dancing, play, and song, — these are their joy; out of these they weave their highest delectation; amid these they 'fleet the time carelessly,' without memory or forecast, and with no thought or aim beyond the passing pleasure of the moment. On the other hand, they have an instinctive repugnance to whatever is foul, ugly, sluttish, awkward, ungainly, or misshapen; they wage unrelenting war against bats, spiders, hedgehogs, spotted snakes, blind-worms, long-legg'd spinners, beetles, and all such disagreeable creatures; to 'kill cankers in the muskrose-buds' and to 'keep back the clamorous owl' are regular parts of their business."

They are indeed such dainty little beings that even Bottom, although he does not precisely "like an airy spirit go," is brightened by their society, becoming at once a linguist and a wit. He not only drops his English blunders, but as he becomes wonted to the fairy court, he makes brief excursions into French and Italian; and his jest on the "patience" of Mustardseed is better than anything that the duke and the courtiers get off in their running comment on the interlude.

The fairy note, as we catch it again and again through the harmonies of the play,

“Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!”

is the purest lyricism. The brief trochaics have the very trip of “dances and delight.” It is a music heard “for the third part of a minute” between Philomel and “the morning lark,” — a music, eerie and jocund, that is gone with the reddening of the east,

“Following darkness like a dream,”

but leaving behind it for the weary hearts of mortals a blithe and fragrant waking to a perennial “morn of May.”

# A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

---

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THESEUS, Duke of Athens.	HIPPOLYTA, Queen of the Amazons.
EGEUS, an Athenian Lord.	HERMIA, daughter of Egeus, in love with
LYSANDER, } in love with Hermia.	Lysander.
DEMETRIUS, }	HELENA, in love with Demetrius.
PHILOSTRATE, Master of the Revels to Theseus.	
PETER QUINCE, a Carpenter.	OBERON, King of the Fairies.
NICK BOTTOM, a Weaver.	TITANIA, Queen of the Fairies.
FRANCIS FLUTE, a Bellows-mender.	PUCK, or ROBIN GOODFELLOW, a Fairy.
TOM SNOUT, a Tinker.	PEASEBLOSSOM, }
ROBIN STARVELING, a Tailor.	COBWEB, } Fairies.
SNUG, a Joiner.	MOTH, }
	MUSTARDSEED, }

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen. Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE: *Athens, and a Wood near it.*

---

## ACT I.

SCENE I. *Athens. The Palace of THESEUS.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, and Attendants.*

THESEUS. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another Moon: but, O, methinks, how slow  
This old Moon wanes! she lingers my desires,

Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,  
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

HIPPOLYTA. Four days will quickly steep themselves  
in nights;  
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;  
And then the Moon, like to a silver bow  
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night  
Of our solemnities. 10

THESEUS. Go, Philostrate,  
Stir up th' Athenian youth to merriments;  
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth:  
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;  
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

[Exit PHILOSTRATE.]

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

*Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, and DEMETRIUS.*

EGEUS. Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke! 20

THESEUS. Thanks, good Egeus: what's the news with  
thee?

EGEUS. Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.  
Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,  
This man hath my consent to marry her.  
Stand forth, Lysander: and, my gracious Duke,  
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child:

Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,  
 And interchang'd love-tokens with my child :  
 Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung 30  
 With feigning voice verses of feigning love,  
 And stolen the impression of her fantasy  
 With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gauds, conceits,  
 Knacks, trifles, nose-gays, sweetmeats, — messengers  
 Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth :  
 With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart ;  
 Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,  
 To stubborn harshness : and, my gracious Duke,  
 Be't so she will not here before your Grace  
 Consent to marry with Demetrius, 40  
 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens, —  
 As she is mine, I may dispose of her :  
 Which shall be either to this gentleman  
 Or to her death, according to our law  
 Immediately provided in that case.

THESEUS. What say you, Hermia ? be advis'd, fair  
 maid :

To you your father should be as a god ;  
 One that compos'd your beauties ; yea, and one  
 To whom you are but as a form in wax,  
 By him imprinted and within his power 50  
 To leave the figure or disfigure it.  
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA. So is Lysander.

THESEUS. In himself he is ;  
 But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,



The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

THESEUS. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

HERMIA. I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.  
I know not by what power I am made bold,  
Nor how it may concern my modesty,  
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts ;  
But I beseech your Grace that I may know  
The worst that may befall me in this case,  
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS. Either to die the death or to abjure  
For ever the society of men.  
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires ;  
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,  
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,  
You can endure the livery of a nun,  
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,  
To live a barren sister all your life,  
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.  
Thrice-blessed they that master so their blood,  
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage ;  
But earthlier-happy is the rose distill'd  
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

HERMIA. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,  
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up  
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke  
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

THESEUS. Take time to pause ; and, by the next new Moon, —

The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,  
For everlasting bond of fellowship, —  
Upon that day either prepare to die  
For disobedience to your father's will,  
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would ;  
Or on Diana's altar to protest  
For aye austerity and single life.

90

DEMETRIUS. Relent, sweet Hermia : and, Lysander,  
yield

Thy crazed title to my certain right.

LYSANDER. You have her father's love, Demetrius ;  
Let me have Hermia's : do you marry him.

EGEUS. Scornful Lysander ! true, he hath my love,  
And what is mine my love shall render him ;  
And she is mine, and all my right of her  
I do estate unto Demetrius.

LYSANDER. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,  
As well possess'd ; my love is more than his ; 100  
My fortunes every way as fairly-rank'd,  
If not with vantage, as Demetrius' ;  
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,  
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia :  
Why should not I, then, prosecute my right ?  
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,  
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,  
And won her soul ; and she, sweet lady, dotes,  
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,

Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

110

THESEUS. I must confess that I have heard so much,  
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof :

But, being over-full of self-affairs,

My mind did lose it. But, Demetrius, come ;

And come, Egeus ; you shall go with me,

I have some private schooling for you both.

For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself

To fit your fancies to your father's will ;

Or else the law of Athens yields you up —

Which by no means we may extenuate —

120

To death, or to a vow of single life.

Come, my Hippolyta : what cheer, my love ? —

Demetrius, and Egeus, go along :

I must employ you in some business

Against our nuptial ; and confer with you

Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

EGEUS. With duty and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS,*

*DEMETRIUS, and Train.*

LYSANDER. How now, my love ! why is your cheek so  
pale ?

How chance the roses there do fade so fast ?

HERMIA. Belike for want of rain, which I could  
well

130

Beteem them from the tempest of mine eyes.

LYSANDER. Ay me ! for aught that ever I could  
read,

Could ever hear by tale or history,

The course of true love never did run smooth;

But, either it was different in blood, —

HERMIA. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!

LYSANDER. Or else misgraffed in respect of years, —

HERMIA. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young!

LYSANDER. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends, —

HERMIA. O Hell! to choose love by another's eyes!

140

LYSANDER. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,  
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,  
Making it momentary as a sound,  
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;  
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,  
And, ere a man hath power to say, *Behold!*  
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:  
So quick bright things come to confusion.

HERMIA. If, then, true lovers have been ever cross'd,

150

It stands as an edict in destiny:  
Then let us teach our trial patience,  
Because it is a customary cross,  
As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,  
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's followers.

LYSANDER. A good persuasion; therefore, hear me,  
Hermia.

I have a widow aunt, a dowager  
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:

From Athens is her house remov'd seven leagues ;  
And she respects me as her only son. 160  
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee ;  
And to that place the sharp Athenian law  
Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me, then,  
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night ;  
And in the wood, a league without the town,  
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,  
To do observance to a morn of May,  
There will I stay for thee.

HERMIA. My good Lysander !  
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,  
By his best arrow with the golden head, 170  
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,  
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,  
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,  
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,  
By all the vows that ever men have broke,  
In number more than ever women spoke,  
In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes  
Helena.

*Enter HELENA.*

HERMIA. God speed fair Helena ! whither away ?

HELENA. Call you me fair ? that *fair* again unsay.  
Demetrius loves you fair : O happy fair ! 182  
Your eyes are lode-stars ; and your tongue's sweet air

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,  
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.  
 Sickness is catching ; O, were favour so,  
 Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go ;  
 My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,  
 My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.  
 Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated, 190  
 The rest I'd give, to be to you translated.  
 O, teach me how you look, and with what art  
 You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart !

HERMIA. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA. O that your frowns would teach my smiles  
 such skill !

HERMIA. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA. O that my prayers could such affection  
 move !

HERMIA. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine. 200

HELENA. None but your beauty : would that fault  
 were mine !

HERMIA. Take comfort : he no more shall see my  
 face ;

Lysander and myself will fly this place.

Before the time I did Lysander see,

Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me :

O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,

That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell !

LYSANDER. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold :

To-morrow night, when Phœbe doth behold  
Her silver visage in the watery glass, 210  
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,  
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,  
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

HERMIA. And in the wood, where often you and I  
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,  
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,  
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;  
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,  
To seek new friends and stranger companies.  
Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us; 220  
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius! —  
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight  
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

LYSANDER. I will, my Hermia. — [*Exit* HERMIA.

Helena, adieu :

As you on him, Demetrius dote on you ! [*Exit*.

HELENA. How happy some o'er other some can be !  
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.  
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;  
He will not know what all but he do know :  
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes, 230  
So I, admiring of his qualities.  
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity :  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind ;  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind :  
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste ;

Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste :  
And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he is so oft beguil'd.  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear, 240  
So the boy Love is perjur'd everywhere :  
For, ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,  
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine ;  
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,  
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oath did melt.  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight :  
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night  
Pursue her ; and for this intelligence  
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense :  
But herein mean I to enrich my pain, 250  
To have his sight thither and back again. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Athens. QUINCE'S House.*

*Enter QUINCE, BOTTOM, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and  
STARVELING.*

QUINCE. Is all our company here ?

BOTTOM. You were best to call them generally, man  
by man, according to the scrip.

QUINCE. Here is the scroll of every man's name,  
which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our  
interlude before the Duke and the Duchess, on his wed-  
ding-day at night.

BOTTOM. First, good Peter Quince, say what the



play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow on to a point. 10

QUINCE. Marry, our play is *The most lamentable Comedy and most cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe*.

BOTTOM. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

QUINCE. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOTTOM. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus. 21

BOTTOM. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

BOTTOM. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest. — Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split. 30

*The raging rocks  
And shivering shocks  
Shall break the locks  
Of prison-gates;  
And Phibbus' car  
Shall shine from far,  
And make and mar  
The foolish Fates.*

This was lofty! — Now name the rest of the players. — This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling. 41

QUINCE. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE. Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE. You must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE. What is Thisbe? a wandering knight?

QUINCE. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE. That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will. 50

BOTTOM. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too: I'll speak in a monstrous little voice; — *Thisne, Thisne, — Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear!*

QUINCE. No, no; you must play Pyramus: — and, Flute, you Thisbe.

BOTTOM. Well, proceed.

QUINCE. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING. Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker. 61

SNOUT. Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisbe's father; Snug the joiner, you, the lion's part: and, I hope, there is a play fitted.

SNUG. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

QUINCE. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring. 69

BOTTOM. Let me play the lion too : I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me ; I will roar, that I will make the Duke say, *Let him roar again, let him roar again.*

QUINCE. If you should do it too terribly, you would fright the Duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek ; and that were enough to hang us all.

ALL. That would hang us, every mother's son.

BOTTOM. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us : but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove ; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale. 82

QUINCE. You can play no part but Pyramus ; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man ; a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day ; a most lovely, gentleman-like man : therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in ?

QUINCE. Why, what you will.

BOTTOM. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-ingrain beard, or your French-crown colour'd beard, your perfect yellow. 93

QUINCE. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced. But, masters, here are your parts : and I am to entreat you, request

you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night ;  
and meet me in the palace-wood, a mile without the  
town, by moonlight : there we will rehearse ; for if we  
meet in the city, we shall be dogg'd with company, and  
our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a  
bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you,  
fail me not. 103

BOTTOM. We will meet ; and there we may rehearse  
more obscenely and courageously. Take pains ; be per-  
fect : adieu.

QUINCE. At the Duke's oak we meet.

BOTTOM. Enough ; hold, or cut bow-strings. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.    *A Wood near Athens.*

*Enter, from opposite sides, a Fairy, and PUCK.*

PUCK. How now, spirit ! whither wander you ?

FAIRY. Over hill, over dale,  
Through bush, through brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Through flood, through fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere ;  
And I serve the Fairy Queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green.

The cowslips tall her pensioners be : 10  
In their gold coats spots you see :  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours

I must go seek some dewdrops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone :  
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

PUCK. The King doth keep his revels here to-night :  
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight ;  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath, 20  
Because that she as her attendant hath  
A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king ;  
She never had so sweet a changeling ;  
And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild ;  
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy :  
And now they never meet in grove or green,  
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,  
But they do square, that all their elves for fear 30  
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

FAIRY. Either I mistake your shape and making  
quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Call'd Robin Goodfellow. Are you not he  
That frights the maidens of the villagere,  
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn ;

And sometime make the drink to bear no barm ;  
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm ?  
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,      40  
You do their work, and they shall have good luck :  
Are you not he ?

Puck.                    Thou speak'st aright ;  
I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,  
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a silly foal :  
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab,  
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob  
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.      50  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me ;  
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And *tailor* cries, and falls into a cough ;  
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.  
But, room, fairy ! here comes Oberon.

FAIRY. And here my mistress. Would that he were  
gone !

*Enter, from one side the King of Fairies with his Train ;  
from the other, the Queen, with hers.*

OBERON. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.      60

TITANIA. What, jealous Oberon ? Fairies, skip  
hence :

I have forsworn his bed and company.

OBERON. Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

TITANIA. Then I must be thy lady: but I know  
When thou hast stol'n away from Fairy-land,  
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,  
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love  
To amorous Phyllida. Why art thou here,  
Come from the farthest steep of India?  
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,  
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,  
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come  
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

70

OBERON. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,  
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?  
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night  
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?  
And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,  
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

80

TITANIA. These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle Summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,  
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea  
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land

90

Hath every petty river made so proud,  
That they have overborne their continents :  
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,  
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn  
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard ;  
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,  
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock ;  
The nine-men's-morris is fill'd up with mud,  
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green  
For lack of tread are undistinguishable : 100  
The human mortals want their winter here ;  
No night is now with hymn or carol blest :  
Therefore the Moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatic diseases do abound ;  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter ; hoary-headed frosts  
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,  
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown  
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds 110  
Is, as in mockery, set : the Spring, the Summer,  
The chiding Autumn, angry Winter, change  
Their wonted liveries ; and the mazed world,  
By their increase, now knows not which is which :  
And this same progeny of evil comes  
From our debate, from our dissension ;  
We are their parents and original.

OBERON. Do you amend it, then ; it lies in you :  
Why should Titania cross her Oberon ?



I do but beg a little changeling boy, 120  
To be my henchman.

TITANIA. Set your heart at rest:  
The Fairy-land buys not the child of me.  
His mother was a votaress of my order:  
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,  
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,  
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,  
Marking th' embarked traders on the flood;  
Which she with pretty and with swimming gait  
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,  
To fetch me trifles, and return again, 130  
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.  
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;  
And for her sake I do rear up her boy;  
And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON. How long within this wood intend you  
stay?

TITANIA. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.  
If you will patiently dance in our round  
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;  
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

OBERON. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

TITANIA. Not for thy Fairy kingdom. Fairies,  
away! 141

We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

[*Exit TITANIA with her train.*]

OBERON. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this  
grove



Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

PUCK. I'd put a girdle round about the Earth  
In forty minutes. [Exit.

OBERON. Having once this juice,  
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.  
The next thing then she waking looks upon,  
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,  
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,  
She shall pursue it with the soul of love :  
And, ere I take this charm off from her sight, 180  
As I can take it with another herb,  
I'll make her render up her page to me.  
But who comes here ? I am invisible ;  
And I will overhear their conference.

*Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA following him.*

DEMETRIUS. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.  
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia ?  
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.  
Thou told'st me they were stol'n into this wood ;  
And here am I, and wood within this wood,  
Because I cannot meet my Hermia. 190  
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant ;  
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart  
Is true as steel : leave you your power to draw,  
And I shall have no power to follow you.

DEMETRIUS. Do I entice you ? Do I speak you fair ?

Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth  
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you ?

HELENA. And even for that do I love thee the more.  
I am your spaniel ; and, Demetrius, 200  
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you :  
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me ; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.  
What worser place can I beg in your love, —  
And yet a place of high respect with me, —  
Than to be used as you use your dog ?

DEMETRIUS. Tempt not too much the hatred of my  
spirit,  
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

HELENA. And I am sick when I look not on you. 210

DEMETRIUS. You do impeach your modesty too  
much,  
To leave the city and commit yourself  
Into the hands of one that loves you not ;  
To trust the opportunity of night,  
And the ill counsel of a desert place,  
With the rich worth of your virginity.

HELENA. Your virtue is my privilege for that.  
It is not night when I do see your face,  
Therefore I think I am not in the night ;  
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company, 220  
For you in my respect are all the world :  
Then how can it be said I am alone,  
When all the world is here to look on me ?

DEMETRIUS. I'll run from thee and hide me in the  
brakes,  
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HELENA. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.  
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd, —  
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;  
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind  
Makes speed to catch the tiger, — bootless speed, 230  
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies!

DEMETRIUS. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:  
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe  
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

HELENA. Ay, in the temple, in the town and field  
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!  
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:  
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;  
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.

[*Exit* DEMETRIUS.

I'll follow thee, and make a Heaven of Hell, 240  
To die upon the hand I love so well. [*Exit*.

OBERON. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave  
this grove,  
Thou shalt fly him and he shall seek thy love.

*Re-enter* PUCK.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

PUCK. Ay, there it is.

OBERON. I pray thee, give it me.  
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,

Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows ;  
 Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
 With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine ;  
 There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,      250  
 Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight ;  
 And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,  
 Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in :  
 And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
 And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
 Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove :  
 A sweet Athenian lady is in love  
 With a disdainful youth : anoint his eyes ;  
 But do it when the next thing he espies  
 May be the lady : thou shalt know the man      260  
 By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
 Effect it with some care that he may prove  
 More fond on her than she upon her love :  
 And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

PUCK. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.      *Another Part of the Wood.*

*Enter the Queen of Fairies, with her Train.*

TITANIA. Come, now a roundel and a fairy song ;  
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence ;  
 Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,  
 Some, war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,  
 To make my small elves coats, and some, keep back

The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and wonders  
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;  
Then to your offices and let me rest.

## FAIRIES' SONG.

1 FAIRY. You spotted snakes with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen; 10  
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,  
Come not near our fairy Queen.

CHORUS. Philomel, with melody  
Sing in our sweet lullaby;  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:  
Never harm,  
Nor spell nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh;  
So, good night, with lullaby.

2 FAIRY. Weaving spiders, come not here; 20  
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence !  
Beetles black, approach not near;  
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

CHORUS. Philomel, with melody, etc.

1 FAIRY. Hence, away ! now all is well :  
One aloof stand sentinel.

[*Exeunt* FAIRIES. TITANIA *sleeps*.

*Enter* OBERON *and squeezes the flower on* TITANIA'S  
*eyelids.*

OBERON. What thou see'st when thou dost wake,  
Do it for thy true-love take ;

Love and languish for his sake:  
 Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,  
 Pard, or boar with bristled hair,  
 In thy eye that shall appear  
 When thou wak'st, it is thy dear:  
 Wake when some vile thing is near.

[*Exit.*

*Enter* LYSANDER *and* HERMIA.

LYSANDER. Fair love, you faint with wandering in  
 the wood;

And, to speak troth, I have forgot our way:  
 We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,  
 And tarry for the comfort of the day.

HERMIA. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed;  
 For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER. One turf shall serve as pillow for us  
 both;  
 One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

HERMIA. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my  
 dear,  
 Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

LYSANDER. O, take the sense, sweet, of my inno-  
 cence!  
 Love takes the meaning in love's conference.  
 I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit  
 So that but one heart can you make of it:  
 Two bosoms interchanged with an oath;  
 So then two bosoms and a single troth.



Then by your side no bed-room me deny ;  
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

HERMIA. Lysander riddles very prettily :  
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,  
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.  
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy  
Lie further off ; in human modesty,  
Such separation as may well be said  
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,  
So far be distant ; and, good night, sweet friend : 60  
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end !

LYSANDER. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I ;  
And then end life when I end loyalty !  
Here is my bed : sleep give thee all his rest !

HERMIA. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be  
press'd ! *[They sleep.]*

*Enter PUCK.*

PUCK. Through the forest have I gone,  
But Athenian find I none,  
On whose eyes I might approve  
This flower's force in stirring love.  
Night and silence ! who is here ? 70  
Weeds of Athens he doth wear :  
This is he my master said  
Despised the Athenian maid ;  
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,  
On the dank and dirty ground.  
Pretty soul ! she durst not lie

Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.  
 Churl, upon thy eyes I throw  
 All the power this charm doth owe.  
 When thou wak'st, let love forbid      80  
 Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:  
 So awake when I am gone;  
 For I must now to Oberon.

*Enter DEMETRIUS and HELENA running.*

HELENA. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

HELENA. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

DEMETRIUS. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.

[*Exit.*

HELENA. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!  
 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.  
 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;      80  
 For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.  
 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:  
 If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.  
 No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;  
 For beasts that meet me run away for fear:  
 Therefore no marvel though Demetrius  
 Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.  
 What wicked and dissembling glass of mine

Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne ?  
But who is here ? Lysander ! on the ground ! 100  
Dead ? or asleep ? I see no blood, no wound.  
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER. [*Starting up.*] And run through fire I  
will for thy sweet sake.

Transparent Helen, Nature here shows art,  
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.  
Where is Demetrius ? O, how fit a word  
Is that vile name to perish on my sword !

HELENA. Do not say so, Lysander ; say not so.  
What though he love your Hermia ? Lord, what  
though ?

Yet Hermia still loves you : then be content. 110

LYSANDER. Content with Hermia ! No ; I do repent  
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.  
Not Hermia, but Helena now I love :  
Who will not change a raven for a dove ?  
The will of man is by his reason sway'd ;  
And reason says you are the worthier maid.  
Things growing are not ripe until their season :  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason ;  
And, touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshal to my will 120  
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook  
Love's stories written in Love's richest book.

HELENA. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery  
born ?  
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn ?

Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,  
That I did never, no, nor never can,  
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,  
But you must flout my insufficiency ?  
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,  
In such disdainful manner me to woo. 130  
But fare you well: perforce I must confess  
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.  
O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,  
Should of another therefore be abus'd ! [Exit.

LYSANDER. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep  
thou there :

And never mayst thou come Lysander near !  
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things  
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings ;  
Or as the heresies that men do leave  
Are hated most of those they did deceive, 140  
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,  
Of all be hated, but the most of me !  
And, all my powers, address your love and might  
To honour Helen and to be her knight ! [Exit.

HERMIA. *[Awaking.]* Help me, Lysander, help me !  
do thy best

To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast !  
Ay me, for pity ! what a dream was here !  
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear :  
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,  
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey. 150  
Lysander ! what, remov'd ? Lysander ! lord !

What, out of hearing ? gone ? no sound, no word ?  
Alack, where are you ? speak, and if you hear ;  
Speak, of all loves ! I swoon almost with fear.  
No ? then I well perceive you are not nigh :  
Either death or you I'll find immediately. [Exit.

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Wood. The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.*

*Enter QUINCE, BOTTOM, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING.*

BOTTOM. Are we all met ?

QUINCE. Pat, pat ; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our 'tiring-house ; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the Duke.

BOTTOM. Peter Quince, —

QUINCE. What say'st thou, bully Bottom ?

BOTTOM. There are things in this comedy of *Pyramus and Thisbe* that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself ; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that ? 11

SNOUT. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

STARVELING. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM. Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not kill'd indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the Weaver: this will put them out of fear.

QUINCE. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six. 22

BOTTOM. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

SNOUT. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING. I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in — God shield us! — a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to it. 31

SNOUT. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect, — *Ladies,* — or, *Fair ladies,* — *I would wish you,* — or, *I would request you,* — or, *I would entreat you,* — *not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:—* and there, indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner. 43

QUINCE. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things, that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

SNOUT. Doth the Moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine. 50

QUINCE. Yes, it doth shine that night.

BOTTOM. Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the Moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall. 60

SNUG. You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

BOTTOM. Some man or other must present Wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

QUINCE. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin; when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue. 72

*Enter Puck behind.*

PUCK. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,  
So near the cradle of the fairy Queen ?  
What, a play toward ! I'll be an auditor ;  
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE. Speak, Pyramus.— Thisbe, stand forth.

BOTTOM. *Thisbe, the flowers of odious savours sweet, —*

QUINCE. *Odours, odours.*

BOTTOM.— *odours savours sweet :*

80

*So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.*

*But hark, a voice ! stay thou but here awhile,*

*And by-and-by I will to thee appear.*

*[Exit.*

PUCK. *[Aside.]* A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here.

*[Exit.*

FLUTE. Must I speak now ?

QUINCE. Ay, marry, must you ; for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

FLUTE. *Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,  
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,      80  
Most briskly juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,  
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,  
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.*

QUINCE. *Ninus' tomb, man : why, you must not speak that yet ; that you answer to Pyramus : you speak all your part at once, cues and all.— Pyramus, enter : your cue is past ; it is, never tire.*



FLUTE. O, — *As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.*

*Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head.*

BOTTOM. *If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only thine : —*

QUINCE. O monstrous ! O strange ! we are haunted.

Pray, masters ! fly, masters ! Help ! 101

*[Exit with SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING.*

PUCK. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,  
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through  
brier :

Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,  
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire ;  
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,  
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. *[Exit.*

BOTTOM. Why do they run away ? this is a knavery  
of them to make me afeard.

*Re-enter SNOUT.*

SNOUT. O Bottom, thou art changed ! what do I see  
on thee ! 111

BOTTOM. What do you see ? you see an ass-head of  
your own, do you ? *[Exit SNOUT.*

*Re-enter QUINCE.*

QUINCE. Bless thee, Bottom ! bless thee ! thou art  
translated. *[Exit.*

BOTTOM. I see their knavery : this is to make an ass  
of me ; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir

from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. 120

[*Sings.*]      The ousel-cock so black of hue,  
                    With orange-tawny bill,  
                    The throstle with his note so true,  
                    The wren with little quill;—

TITANIA. [*Awaking.*]    What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM. [*Sings.*]

                    The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,  
                    The plain-song cuckoo gray,  
                    Whose note full many a man doth mark,  
                    And dares not answer nay;— 129

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry *cuckoo* never so?

TITANIA.    I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:  
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;  
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;  
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,  
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM.    Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days; the more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion. 142

TITANIA.    Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM. 'Not so, neither : but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

TITANIA. Out of this wood do not desire to go :  
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.  
I am a spirit of no common rate ;  
The Summer still doth tend upon my state ; 150  
And I do love thee : therefore go with me ;  
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee ;  
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,  
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep :  
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,  
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.  
Peaseblossom ! Cobweb ! Moth ! and Mustard-seed !

*Enter Four Fairies.*

PEASEBLOSSOM. Ready.

COBWEB. And I.

MOTH. And I. 160

MUSTARD-SEED. And I.

ALL FOUR. Where shall we go ?

TITANIA. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman ;  
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes ;  
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,  
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries ;  
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,  
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs  
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,  
To have my love to bed and to arise ; 170

And pluck the wings from painted butterflies  
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes :  
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

PEASEBLOSSOM. Hail, mortal !

COBWEB. Hail !

MOTH. Hail !

MUSTARD-SEED. Hail !

BOTTOM. I cry your Worships mercy heartily. I beseech your Worship's name.

COBWEB. Cobweb.

180

BOTTOM. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb : if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name, honest gentleman ?

PEASEBLOSSOM. Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire of you more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you, sir ?

MUSTARD-SEED. Mustard-seed.

190

BOTTOM. Good Master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well : that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your House : I promise you your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good Master Mustard-seed.

TITANIA. Come, wait upon him ; lead him to my bower.

The Moon methinks looks with a watery eye ;

And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,  
Lamenting some enforced chastity. 200  
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Another Part of the Wood.*

*Enter the KING OF FAIRIES.*

OBERON. I wonder if Titania be awak'd;  
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,  
Which she must dote on in extremity.

*Enter PUCK.*

Here comes my messenger.

How now, mad spirit!

What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

PUCK. My mistress with a monster is in love.  
Near to her close and consecrated bower,  
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,  
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,  
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls, 10  
Were met together to rehearse a play,  
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.  
The shallowest thickskin of that barren sort,  
Who Pyramus presented in their sport,  
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:  
When I did him at this advantage take,  
An ass's noll I fixed on his head:  
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,

And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,  
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,      20  
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,  
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,  
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,  
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly ;  
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls ;  
He *murder* cries and help from Athens calls.  
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,  
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong ;  
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch ;  
Some, sleeves, some, hats, from yielders all things catch.  
I led them on in this distracted fear,      31  
And left sweet Pyramus translated there :  
When, in that moment, so it came to pass,  
Titania wak'd and straightway lov'd an ass.

OBERON. This falls out better than I could devise.  
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes  
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do ?

PUCK. I took him sleeping, — that is finish'd too, —  
And the Athenian woman by his side ;  
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be eyed.      40

*Enter HERMIA and DEMETRIUS.*

OBERON. Stand close : this is the same Athenian.

PUCK. This is the woman, but not this the man.

DEMETRIUS. O, why rebuke you him that loves you  
so ?

Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

HERMIA. Now I but chide; but I should use thee  
worse,  
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.  
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,  
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,  
And kill me too.

The Sun was not so true unto the day 50  
As he to me: would he have stolen away  
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon  
This whole Earth may be bored, and that the Moon  
May through the centre creep, and so displease  
Her brother's noontide with th' Antipodes.  
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;  
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

DEMETRIUS. So should the murder'd look; and so  
should I,  
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty:  
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear, 60  
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

HERMIA. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?  
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

DEMETRIUS. I'd rather give his carcass to my hounds.

HERMIA. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past  
the bounds

Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?  
Henceforth be never number'd among men!  
O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!  
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake?  
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch! 70

Could not a worm, an adder, do so much ?  
An adder did it ; for with doubler tongue  
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

DEMETRIUS. You spend your passion on a mispris'd  
mood :

I am not guilty of Lysander's blood ;  
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

HERMIA. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

DEMETRIUS. And if I could, what should I get there-  
fore ?

HERMIA. A privilege never to see me more.  
And from thy hated presence part I so : 80  
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [Exit.

DEMETRIUS. There is no following her in this fierce  
vein :

Here therefore for a while I will remain.  
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow  
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe ;  
Which now in some slight measure it will pay,  
If for his tender here I make some stay.

*[Lies down and sleeps.*

OBERON. What hast thou done ? thou hast mistaken  
quite,  
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight :  
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue 80  
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

PUCK. Then fate o'er-rules ; that, one man holding  
troth,  
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.



OBERON. About the wood go swifter than the wind,  
And Helena of Athens look thou find :  
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer  
With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear :  
By some illusion see thou bring her here :  
I'll charm his eyes against she doth appear.

PUCK. I go, I go ; look how I go, 100  
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [Exit.

OBERON. Flower of this purple dye,  
Hit with Cupid's archery,  
Sink in apple of his eye !  
When his love he doth espy,  
Let her shine as gloriously  
As the Venus of the sky.  
When thou wak'st, if she be by,  
Beg of her for remedy.

*Re-enter Puck.*

PUCK. Captain of our fairy band, 110  
Helena is here at hand ;  
And the youth, mistook by me,  
Pleading for a lover's fee.  
Shall we their fond pageant see ?  
Lord, what fools these mortals be !  
OBERON. Stand aside : the noise they make  
Will cause Demetrius to awake.  
PUCK. Then will two at once woo one ;  
That must needs be sport alone ;  
And those things do best please me 120  
That befall preposterously.

*Re-enter HELENA and LYSANDER.*

LYSANDER. Why should you think that I should woo  
in scorn ?

' Scorn and derision never comes in tears :  
Look, when I vow, I weep : and vows so born,  
In their nativity all truth appears.  
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,  
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true ?

HELENA. You do advance your cunning more and  
more.

When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray !  
These vows are Hermia's : will you give her o'er ? 130  
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh :  
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,  
Will even weigh ; and both as light as tales.

LYSANDER. I had no judgment when to her I  
swore.

HELENA. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her  
o'er.

LYSANDER. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not  
you.

DEMETRIUS. [*Awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph,  
perfect, divine !

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne ?  
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show  
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow ! 140  
That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,  
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow

When thou hold'st up thy hand : O, let me kiss  
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss !

HELENA. O spite ! O Hell ! I see you all are bent  
To set against me for your merriment :

If you were civil and knew courtesy,

You would not do me thus much injury.

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,

But you must join in souls to mock me too ?

150

If you were men, as men you are in show,

You would not use a gentle lady so ;

To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia ;

And now both rivals, to mock Helena :

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,

To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes

With your derision ! none of noble sort

Would so offend a virgin and extort

160

A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

LYSANDER. You are unkind, Demetrius ; be not so ;

For you love Hermia : this you know I know :

And here, with all good will, with all my heart,

In Hermia's love I yield you up my part ;

And yours of Helena to me bequeath,

Whom I do love and will do to my death.

HELENA. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

DEMETRIUS. Lysander, keep thy Hermia ; I will none :

If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.

170

My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,

And now to Helen it is home return'd,  
There to remain.

LYSANDER. Helen, it is not so.

DEMETRIUS. Disparage not the faith thou dost not  
know,  
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.  
Look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

*Re-enter HERMIA.*

HERMIA. Dark night, that from the eye his function  
takes,  
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;  
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,  
It pays the hearing double recompense. 180  
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;  
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.  
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

LYSANDER. Why should he stay, whom love doth  
press to go?

HERMIA. What love could press Lysander from my  
side?

LYSANDER. Lysander's love, that would not let him  
bide,  
Fair Helena; who more engilds the night  
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.  
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,  
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so? 190

HERMIA. You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

HELENA. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!

Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three  
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.  
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!  
Have you conspired, have you with these contriv'd  
To bait me with this foul derision?  
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,  
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time 200  
For parting us, — O, is all forgot?  
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
Have with our needles created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;  
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,  
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,  
But yet a union in partition; 210  
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;  
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
Due but to one and crowned with one crest.  
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,  
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:  
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,  
Though I alone do feel the injury.

HERMIA. I am amazed at your passionate words. 220  
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

HELENA. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,  
 To follow me and praise my eyes and face ?  
 And made your other love, Demetrius,  
 Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,  
 To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,  
 Precious, celestial ? Wherefore speaks he this  
 To her he hates ? and wherefore doth Lysander  
 Deny your love, so rich within his soul,  
 And tender me, forsooth, affection, 230  
 But by your setting on, by your consent ?  
 What though I be not so in grace as you,  
 So hung upon with love, so fortunate ;  
 But miserable most, to love unlov'd ?  
 This you should pity rather than despise.

HERMIA. I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA. Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks ;  
 Make mouths upon me when I turn my back ;  
 Wink each at other ; hold the sweet jest up :  
 This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled. 240  
 If you have any pity, grace, or manners,  
 You would not make me such an argument.  
 But fare ye well : 'tis partly mine own fault ;  
 Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

LYSANDER. Stay, gentle Helena ; hear my excuse :  
 My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena !

HELENA. O excellent !

HERMIA. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

DEMETRIUS. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

LYSANDER. Thou canst compel no more than she  
 entreat :

Thy threats have no more strength than her weak  
prayers. 250

Helen, I love thee ; by my life I do :

I swear by that which I will lose for thee,

To prove him false that says I love thee not.

DEMETRIUS. I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS. Quick, come !

HERMIA. Lysander, whereto tends  
all this ?

LYSANDER. Away, you Ethiope !

DEMETRIUS. No, no, sir ;

Seem to break loose, take on as you would follow,

But yet come not : you are a tame man, go !

LYSANDER. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr ! vile  
thing, let loose, 260

Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent !

HERMIA. Why are you grown so rude ? what change  
is this,

Sweet love ?

LYSANDER. Thy love ! out, tawny Tartar, out !

Out, loathed medicine ! O hated poison, hence !

HERMIA. Do you not jest ?

HELENA. Yes, sooth ; and so do  
you.

LYSANDER. Demetrius, I will keep my word with  
thee.

DEMETRIUS. I would I had your bond, for I perceive  
A weak bond holds you : I'll not trust your word.

LYSANDER. What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead ?

Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so. 270

HERMIA. What, can you do me greater harm than hate ?

Hate me ! wherefore ? O me ! what news, my love !

Am not I Hermia ? are not you Lysander ?

I am as fair now as I was erewhile.

Since night you lov'd me ; yet since night you left me :

Why, then you left me, — O, the gods forbid ! —

In earnest, shall I say ?

LYSANDER. Ay, by my life ;

And never did desire to see thee more.

Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt ;

Be certain, nothing truer ; 'tis no jest 280

That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

HERMIA. O me ! you juggler ! you canker-blossom !

You thief of love ! what, have you come by night

And stol'n my love's heart from him ?

HELENA. Fine, i'faith !

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,

No touch of bashfulness ? What, will you tear

Impatient answers from my gentle tongue ?

Fie, fie ! you counterfeit, you puppet, you !

HERMIA. Puppet ! why, so ; ay, that way goes the game.

Now I perceive that she hath made compare 290

Between our statures ; she hath urg'd her height ;

And with her personage, her tall personage,



Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.  
And are you grown so high in his esteem,  
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?  
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;  
How low am I? I am not yet so low  
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

HELENA. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,

Let her not hurt me: I was never curst; 300  
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;  
I am a right maid for my cowardice:  
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,  
Because she is something lower than myself,  
That I can match her.

HERMIA. Lower! hark again.

HELENA. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.  
I evermore did love you, Hermia,  
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;  
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,  
I told him of your stealth unto this wood. 310  
He follow'd you; for love I follow'd him;  
But he hath chid me hence and threaten'd me  
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:  
And now, so you will let me quiet go,  
To Athens will I bear my folly back  
And follow you no further: let me go:  
You see how simple and how fond I am.

HERMIA. Why, get you gone: who is't that hinders you?

HELENA. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

HERMIA. What, with Lysander ?

HELENA. With Demetrius.

LYSANDER. Be not afraid ; she shall not harm thee,  
Helena. 321

DEMETRIUS. No, sir, she shall not, though you take her part.

HELENA. O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd !

She was a vixen when she went to school ;  
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

HERMIA. Little again ! nothing but low and little !  
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus ?  
Let me come to her.

LYSANDER. Get you gone, you dwarf ;  
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made ;  
You bead, you acorn.

DEMETRIUS. You are too officious 330  
In her behalf that scorns your services.  
Let her alone : speak not of Helena ;  
Take not her part ; for, if thou dost intend  
Never so little show of love to her,  
Thou shalt aby it.

LYSANDER. Now she holds me not ;  
Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,  
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

DEMETRIUS. Follow ! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.  
[*Exeunt* LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS.]

HERMIA. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you :  
Nay, go not back.

HELENA. I will not trust you, I, 340  
Nor longer stay in your curst company.  
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray ;  
My legs are longer though, to run away. [Exit.

HERMIA. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.  
[Exit.

OBERON. This is thy negligence : still thou mistak'st,  
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

PUCK. Believe me, King of shadows, I mistook.  
Did you not tell me I should know the man  
By the Athenian garments he had on ?  
And so far blameless proves my enterprise, 350  
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes ;  
And so far am I glad it so did sort,  
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

OBERON. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to  
fight:

Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;  
The starry welkin cover thou anon  
With drooping fog as black as Acheron,  
And lead these testy rivals so astray  
As one come not within another's way.  
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue 360  
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong ;  
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius ;  
And from each other look thou lead them thus,  
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep

With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep :  
 Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye ;  
 Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,  
 To take from thence all error with his might,  
 And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.  
 When they next wake, all this derision 370  
 Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision ;  
 And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,  
 With league whose date till death shall never end.  
 Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,  
 I'll to my Queen and beg her Indian boy ;  
 And then I will her charmed eye release  
 From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

PUCK. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,  
 For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,  
 And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger ; 380  
 At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
 Troop home to churchyards : damned spirits all,  
 That in crossways and floods have burial,  
 Already to their wormy beds are gone ;  
 For fear lest day should look their shames upon,  
 They wilfully themselves exile from light  
 And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

OBERON. But we are spirits of another sort :  
 I with the Morning's love have oft made sport,  
 And, like a forester, the groves may tread, 390  
 Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,  
 Opening on Neptune, with fair blessed beams  
 Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams.

But, notwithstanding, haste ; make no delay :

We may effect this business yet ere day.

[*Exit.*

PUCK. Up and down, up and down,  
I will lead them up and down :  
I am fear'd in field and town :  
Goblin, lead them up and down.

Here comes one.

400

*Re-enter* LYSANDER.

LYSANDER. Where art thou, proud Demetrius ? speak  
thou now.

PUCK. Here, villain ; drawn and ready. Where art  
thou ?

LYSANDER. I will be with thee straight.

PUCK. Follow me, then,

To plainer ground.

[*Exit* LYSANDER, *as following the voice.*

*Re-enter* DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS. Lysander, speak again :  
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled ?  
Speak ! in some bush ? where dost thou hide thy head ?

PUCK. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,  
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,  
And wilt not come ? Come, recreant ; come, thou child ;  
I'll whip thee with a rod : he is defil'd  
That draws a sword on thee.

410

DEMETRIUS. Yea, art thou there ?

PUCK. Follow my voice : we'll try no manhood here.

[*Exeunt.*

*Re-enter* LYSANDER.

LYSANDER. He goes before me and still dares me on :  
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.  
The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I :  
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly ;  
That fall'n am I in dark uneven way,  
And here will rest me. [*Lies down.*] Come, thou gentle day !  
For, if but once thou show me thy gray light,  
I'll find Demetrius and revenge this spite. [*Sleeps.* 420

*Re-enter* PUCK and DEMETRIUS.

PUCK. Ho, ho, ho ! Coward, why com'st thou not ?  
DEMETRIUS. Abide me, if thou dar'st ; for well I wot  
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place,  
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.  
Where art thou now ?  
PUCK. Come hither : I am here.  
DEMETRIUS. Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt  
buy this dear,  
If ever I thy face by daylight see :  
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me  
To measure out my length on this cold bed.  
By day's approach look to be visited. 430  
[*Lies down and sleeps.*

*Re-enter* HELENA.

HELENA. O weary night, O long and tedious night,  
Abate thy hours ! Shine comforts from the East,

That I may back to Athens by daylight,  
From these that my poor company detest :  
And sleep, that sometime shuts up sorrow's eye,  
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*]

PUCK. Yet but three ? Come one more ;  
Two of both kinds makes up four.  
Here she comes, curst and sad :  
Cupid is a knavish lad,  
Thus to make poor females mad.

440

*Re-enter HERMIA.*

HERMIA. Never so weary, never so in woe,  
Bedabbled with the dew and torn with briers,  
I can no further crawl, no further go ;  
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.  
Here will I rest me till the break of day.  
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray !

[*Lies down and sleeps.*]

PUCK. On the ground  
Sleep sound :  
I'll apply  
To your eye,  
Gentle lover, remedy.

450

[*Squeezing the flower on LYSANDER'S eyelids.*  
When thou wak'st,  
Thou tak'st  
True delight  
In the sight

Of thy former lady's eye:  
 And the country proverb known,  
 That every man should take his own,  
 In your waking shall be shown :     460  
 Jack shall have Jill ;  
 Nought shall go ill ;

The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.  
 [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.   *The Wood.*   LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA,  
 and HERMIA, *lying asleep.*

*Enter the Queen of Fairies and BOTTOM ; PEASEBLOSSOM,  
 COBWEB, MOTH, MUSTARD-SEED, and other Fairies  
 attending ; the King of Fairies behind unseen.*

TITANIA.   Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,  
 While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,  
 And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,  
 And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

BOTTOM.   Where's Peaseblossom ?

PEASEBLOSSOM.   Ready.

BOTTOM.   Scratch my head, Peaseblossom.   Where's  
 Monsieur Cobweb ?

COBWEB.   Ready.     9

BOTTOM.   Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get your  
 weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipp'd humble-



bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur, and, good monsieur; have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where's Monsieur Mustard-seed?

MUSTARD-SEED. Ready.

BOTTOM. Give me your neif, Monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur. 20

MUSTARD-SEED. What's your will?

BOTTOM. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

TITANIA. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

BOTTOM. I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let us have the tongs and the bones.

[*Rural music. Tongs.*]

TITANIA. Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat. 30

BOTTOM. Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay hath no fellow.

TITANIA. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee thence new nuts.

BOTTOM. I had rather have a handful or two of dried

peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me:  
I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

[*Exeunt FAIRIES.*

TITANIA. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms:  
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away. 41

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle

Gently entwist; the female ivy so

Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [*They sleep.*

*Enter PUCK.*

OBERON. [*Advancing.*] Welcome, good Robin. See'st  
thou this sweet sight?

Her dotage now I do begin to pity:

For, meeting her of late behind the wood,

Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,

I did upbraid her, and fall out with her; 50

For she his hairy temples then had rounded

With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;

And that same dew, which sometime on the buds

Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,

Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,

Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.

When I had at my pleasure taunted her

And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,

I then did ask of her her changeling child;

Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent, 60

To bear him to my bower in Fairy-land.

And now I have the boy, I will undo

This hateful imperfection of her eyes.  
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp  
From off the head of this Athenian swain;  
That he, awaking when the other do,  
May all to Athens back again repair,  
And think no more of this night's accidents,  
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.  
But first I will release the fairy Queen.

70

Be thou as thou wast wont to be;  
See as thou wast wont to see:  
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower  
Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet Queen.

TITANIA. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!  
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

OBERON. There lies your love.

TITANIA. How came these things  
to pass?

O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

OBERON. Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.  
Titania, music call; and strike more dead  
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

81

TITANIA. Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!

PUCK. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own  
fool's eyes peep.

OBERON. Sound, music! [*Still music.*]—Come, my  
Queen, take hands with me,  
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.  
Now thou and I are new in amity

And will to-morrow midnight solemnly  
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly  
And bless it to all fair posterity : 80  
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be  
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

PUCK. Fairy King, attend, and mark :  
I do hear the morning lark.

OBERON. Then, my Queen, in silence sad,  
Trip we after the night's shade :  
We the globe can compass soon,  
Swifter than the wandering Moon.

**TITANIA.** Come, my lord ; and in our flight  
Tell me how it came this night  
That I sleeping here was found  
With these mortals on the ground.

*Exeunt Fairies. Horns winded within.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, and Train.*

THESEUS. Go, one of you, find out the forester ;  
For now our observation is perform'd ;  
And, since we have the vaward of the day,  
My love shall hear the music of my hounds :  
Uncouple in the western valley ; let them go ;  
Dispatch, I say, and find the forester.

[*Exit an Attendant.*

We will, fair Queen, up to the mountain's top,  
And mark the musical confusion  
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

HIPOLYTA. I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,

When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear  
With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear  
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,  
The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

THESEUS. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan  
kind,  
So flew'd, so sanded, and their heads are hung 120  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;  
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;  
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tuneable  
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:  
Judge when you hear. But, soft! what nymphs are  
these?

EGEUS. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep;  
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;  
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena: 130  
I wonder of their being here together.

THESEUS. No doubt they rose up early to observe  
The rite of May; and hearing our intent,  
Came here in grace of our solemnity.  
But speak, Egeus; is not this the day  
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

EGEUS. It is, my lord.

THESEUS. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their  
horns.

[*Exit an Attendant. Horns and shout within.* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, and HERMIA, *awake and start up.*

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past :  
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now ? 140

LYSANDER. Pardon, my lord.

THESEUS. I pray you all, stand up.

I know you two are rival enemies :  
How comes this gentle concord in the world,  
That hatred is so far from jealousy,  
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity ?

LYSANDER. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,  
Half sleep, half waking : but as yet, I swear,  
I cannot truly say how I came here ;  
But, as I think, — for truly would I speak,  
And now I do bethink me, so it is, — 150  
I came with Hermia hither : our intent  
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might be  
Without the peril of th' Athenian law.

EGEUS. Enough, enough, my lord ; you have enough :  
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.  
They would have stol'n away ; they would, Demetrius,  
Thereby to have defeated you and me,  
You of your wife, and me of my consent,  
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

DEMETRIUS. My lord, fair Helen told me of their  
stealth, 160  
Of this their purpose hither to this wood ;  
And I in fury hither follow'd them,

Fair Helena in fancy following me.

But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,  
But by some power it is, my love to Hermia,  
Melted as the snow, seems to me now

As the remembrance of an idle gaud,

Which in my childhood I did dote upon ;

And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,

The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,

170

Is only Helena. To her, my lord,

Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia :

But like a sickness did I loathe this food ;

Now, as in health, come to my natural taste,

Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,

And will for evermore be true to it.

THESEUS. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met :

Of this discourse we shall hear more anon.

Egeus, I will overbear your will ;

For in the temple, by-and-by, with us,

180

These couples shall eternally be knit :

And, for the morning now is something worn,

Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.

Away with us to Athens ! three and three,

We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.

Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, and Train.*]

DEMETRIUS. These things seem small and undistinguishable,

Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

HERMIA. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,





be called *Bottom's Dream*, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of our play before the Duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it after death. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *Athens. A Room in QUINCE's House.*

*Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING.*

QUINCE. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

STARVELING. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

FLUTE. If he come not, then the play is marr'd: it goes not forward, doth it?

QUINCE. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

FLUTE. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens. 10

QUINCE. Yea, and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

FLUTE. You must say paragon: a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

*Enter SNUG.*

SNUG. Masters, the Duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men. 18

FLUTE. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have scaped sixpence a day: an the Duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hang'd; he would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

*Enter Bottom.*

BOTTOM. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

QUINCE. Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour! 28

BOTTOM. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

QUINCE. Let us hear, sweet Bottom. 33

BOTTOM. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisbe have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! go; away! [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Athens. The Palace of THESEUS.**Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords,  
and Attendants.*HIPPOLYTA. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these  
lovers speak of.THESEUS. More strange than true: I never may be-  
lieve

These antique fables nor these fairy toys.  
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact.  
One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold,  
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic, 10  
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:  
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.  
Such tricks hath strong imagination,  
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,

It comprehends some bringer of that joy; 20  
Or in the night, imagining some fear,  
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

HIPPOLYTA. But all the story of the night told over,  
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,  
More witnesseth than fancy's images,  
And grows to something of great constancy;  
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

THESEUS. Here come the lovers, full of joy and  
mirth.

*Enter* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, *and* HELENA.

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love  
Accompany your hearts!

LYSANDER. More than to us 30  
Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

THESEUS. Come now; what masques, what dances  
shall we have,

To wear away this long age of three hours

Between our after-supper and bed-time?

Where is our usual manager of mirth?

What revels are in hand? Is there no play,

To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?

Call Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE. Here, mighty Theseus.

THESEUS. Say, what abridgement have you for this  
evening?

What masque? what music? How shall we beguile 40

The lazy time, if not with some delight?

PHILOSTRATE. There is a brief how many sports are  
ripe:

Made choice of which your Highness will see first.

[*Giving a paper, which THESEUS hands to LYSANDER to read.*]

LYSANDER. [*Reads.*] The battle with the Centaurs  
to be sung

By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.

THESEUS. We'll none of that: that have I told my  
love,

In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

LYSANDER. [*Reads.*] The riot of the tipsy Bac-  
chanals,

Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.

THESEUS. That is an old device; and it was play'd 50  
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

LYSANDER. [*Reads.*] The thrice-three Muses mourn-  
ing for the death

Of Learning, late deceas'd in beggary.

THESEUS. That is some satire, keen and critical,  
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

LYSANDER. [*Reads.*] A tedious brief scene of young  
Pyramus

And his love Thisbe: very tragical mirth.

THESEUS. Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!  
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.

How shall we find the concord of this discord? 60

PHILOSTRATE. A play there is, my lord, some ten  
words long,

Which is as brief as I have known a play ;  
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,  
Which makes it tedious ; for in all the play  
There is not one word apt, one player fitted :  
And tragical, my noble lord, it is ;  
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.  
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,  
Made mine eyes water ; but more merry tears  
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

70

THESEUS. What are they that do play it ?

PHILOSTRATE. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens  
here,

Which never labour'd in their minds till now ;  
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd memories  
With this same play, against your nuptial.

THESEUS. And we will hear it.

PHILOSTRATE. No, my noble lord ;

It is not for you : I have heard it over,  
And it is nothing, nothing in the world,  
Unless you can find sport in their intents,  
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,  
To do you service.

80

THESEUS. I will hear that play  
For never any thing can be amiss,  
When simpleness and duty tender it.  
Go, bring them in : and take your places, ladies.

[*Exit* PHILOSTRATE.]

HIPPOLYTA. I love not to see wretchedness o'er-  
charg'd,

And duty in his service perishing.

THESEUS. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

HIPPOLYTA. He says they can do nothing in this kind.

THESEUS. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.

Our sport shall be to take what they mistake: 90

And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect  
Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I have come, great clerks have purposed  
To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;

Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,

And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,

Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,

Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome ; 100

And in the modesty of fearful duty

I read as much as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,

In least speak most, to my capacity.

*Re-enter PHILOSTRATE.*

PHILOSTRATE. So please your Grace, the Prologue is address'd.

THESEUS. Let him approach.

*[Flourish of Trumpets.]*

*Enter QUINCE for the Prologue.*

PROLOGUE. If we offend, it is with our good-will.  
That you should think, we come not to offend,  
But with good-will. To show our simple skill,      110  
That is the true beginning of our end.  
Consider then, we come but in despite.  
We do not come as minding to content you,  
Our true intent is. All for your delight,  
We are not here. That you should here repent you,  
The actors are at hand ; and by their show,  
You shall know all, that you are like to know.      [*Exit.*

THESEUS. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

LYSANDER. He hath rid his prologue like a rough  
colt ; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord :  
it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.      121

HIPPOLYTA. Indeed he hath play'd on his prologue  
like a child on a recorder ; a sound, but not in govern-  
ment.

THESEUS. His speech was like a tangled chain ;  
nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next ?

*Re-enter PROLOGUE, preceded by the blast of a trumpet.*

*Enter PYRAMUS and THISBE, WALL, MOONSHINE, and  
LION.*

PROLOGUE. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this  
show,  
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.  
This man is Pyramus, if you would know ;



This beauteous lady, Thisbe is certain. 130  
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present  
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder;  
And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content  
To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.  
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,  
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,  
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn  
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.  
This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,  
The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night, 140  
Did scare away, or rather did affright;  
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,  
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.  
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,  
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain:  
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,  
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;  
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,  
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,  
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain 150  
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

[*Exeunt* PROLOGUE, PYRAMUS, THISBE,

LION, and MOONSHINE.

THESEUS. I wonder if the lion be to speak.

DEMETRIUS. No wonder, my lord: one lion may,  
when many asses do.

WALL. In this same interlude it doth befall  
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;

And such a wall, as I would have you think,  
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,  
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,  
Did whisper often very secretly. 160

This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show  
That I am that same wall ; the truth is so :  
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,  
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

THESEUS. Would you desire lime and hair to speak  
better ?

DEMETRIUS. It is the wittiest partition that ever I  
heard discourse, my lord.

THESEUS. Pyramus draws near the wall : silence !

*Enter PYRAMUS.*

PYRAMUS. O grim-look'd night ! O night with hue  
so black ! 170

O night, which ever art when day is not !  
O night, O night ! alack, alack, alack,  
I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot !  
And thou, O wall, thou sweet and lovely wall,  
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine !  
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,  
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne !

[WALL holds up his fingers.]

Thanks, courteous wall : Jove shield thee well for this !  
But what see I ? No Thisbe do I see.  
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss ! 180  
Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me !

THESEUS. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

PYRAMUS. No, in truth, sir, he should not. *Deceiving me* is Thisbe's cue: she is to enter, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

*Enter THISBE.*

THISBE. O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,  
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!  
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones, 190  
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

PYRAMUS. I see a voice: now will I to the chink,  
To spy an I can hear my Thisbe's face.  
Thisbe!

THISBE. My love! thou art my love, I think.

PYRAMUS. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's  
Grace;

And like Limander am I trusty still.

THISBE. And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

PYRAMUS. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

THISBE. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

PYRAMUS. O, kiss me through the hole of this vile  
wall! 200

THISBE. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

PYRAMUS. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me  
straightway?

THISBE. 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

*[Exeunt PYRAMUS and THISBE.]*

WALL. Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so ;  
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go. [*Exit.*]

THESEUS. Now is the mural down between the two  
neighbours.

DEMETRIUS. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so  
wilful to hear without warning.

HIPPOLYTA. This is the silliest stuff that e'er I  
heard. 211

THESEUS. The best in this kind are but shadows ;  
and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

HIPPOLYTA. It must be your imagination then, and  
not theirs.

THESEUS. If we imagine no worse of them than they  
of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here  
come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.

*Enter LION and MOONSHINE.*

LION. You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear  
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor, 220  
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,  
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.  
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am  
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam ;  
For, if I should as lion come in strife  
Into this place, 'twere pity of my life.

THESEUS. A very gentle beast, and of a good con-  
science.

DEMETRIUS. The very best at a beast, my lord, that  
e'er I saw. 230

LYSANDER. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

THESEUS. True; and a goose for his discretion.

DEMETRIUS. Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

THESEUS. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us hearken to the Moon.

MOON. This lanthorn doth the horned Moon present;—

DEMETRIUS. He should have worn the horns on his head. 241

THESEUS. He is not crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

MOON. This lanthorn doth the horned Moon present;

Myself the Man-i'the-Moon do seem to be.

THESEUS. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the Man-i'the-Moon?

DEMETRIUS. He dares not come there for the candle; for, you see, it is already in snuff. 250

HIPPOLYTA. I am weary of this Moon: would he would change!

THESEUS. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

LYSANDER. Proceed, Moon.

MOON. All that I have to say is, to tell you that the

lanthorn is the Moon; I, the Man-in-the-Moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog. 259

DEMETRIUS. Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for they are in the Moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

*Enter THISBE.*

THISBE. This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

LION. [*Roaring.*] O -- [*THISBE runs off.*

DEMETRIUS. Well roar'd, lion.

THESEUS. Well run, Thisbe.

HIPPOLYTA. Well shone, Moon. Truly the Moon shines with a good grace.

[*Lion shakes THISBE's mantle, and exit.*

THESEUS. Well mous'd, lion.

DEMETRIUS. And then came Pyramus. 270

LYSANDER. And so the lion vanished.

*Enter PYRAMUS.*

PYRAMUS. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;

I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;

For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,

I trust to taste of truest Thisbe's sight.

But stay, O spite!

But mark, poor knight,

What dreadful dole is here!

Eyes, do you see ?  
How can it be ? 280  
O dainty duck ! O dear !  
Thy mantle good,  
What, stain'd with blood !  
Approach, you Furies fell !  
O Fates, come, come,  
Cut thread and thrum ;  
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell !

THESEUS. This passion, and the death of a dear  
friend, would go near to make a man look sad. 289

HIPPOLYTA. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

PYRAMUS. O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions  
frame ?

Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear :  
Which is — no, no — which was the fairest dame  
That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with  
cheer.

Come, tears, confound ;  
Out, sword, and wound  
The pap of Pyramus ;  
Ay, that left pap,  
Where heart doth hop :  
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus. 300

*[Stabs himself three or four times.]*

Now am I dead,  
Now am I fled ;  
My soul is in the sky :

Tongue, lose thy light !  
Moon, take thy flight ! [*Exit MOONSHINE.*]  
Now die, die, die, die, die.

DEMETRIUS. No die, but an ace, for him ; for he is but one.

LYSANDER. Less than an ace, man ; for he is dead ; he is nothing. 310

THESEUS. With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

HIPPOLYTA. How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover ?

THESEUS. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes ; and her passion ends the play.

*Re-enter THISBE.*

HIPPOLYTA. Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus : I hope she will be brief.

DEMETRIUS. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better ; he for a man, God warrant us, she for a woman, God bless us. 321

LYSANDER. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

DEMETRIUS. And thus she moans, *videlicet* : —

THISBE. Asleep, my love ?

What, dead, my dove ?

O Pyramus arise !

Speak, speak. Quite dumb ?

Dead, dead ? A tomb



Must cover thy sweet eyes. 330  
These lily lips,  
This cherry nose,  
These yellow cowslip cheeks,  
Are gone, are gone :  
Lovers, make moan :  
His eyes were green as leeks.  
O Sisters Three,  
Come, come to me,  
With hands as pale as milk ;  
Lay them in gore, 340  
Since you have shore  
With shears his thread of silk.  
Tongue, not a word :  
Come, trusty sword ;  
Come, blade, my breast imbrue :  
[Stabs herself.  
And, farewell, friends ;  
Thus Thisbe ends :  
Adieu, adieu, adieu. [Dies.

THESEUS. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead. 350

DEMETRIUS. Ay, and Wall too.

BOTTOM. No, I assure you ; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company ?

THESEUS. No epilogue, I pray you ; for your play

needs no excuse. Never excuse; for, when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had play'd Pyramus and hang'd himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But, come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. 362

[*A dance.*

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:  
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy-time.

I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn,  
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.  
This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd  
The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity

369

In nightly revels and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter PUCK, with a broom.*

PUCK. Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolf behowls the Moon;  
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
All with weary task fordone.  
Now the wasted brands do glow,  
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,  
Puts the wretch that lies in woe  
In remembrance of a shroud.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves, all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide:

390

And we fairies, that do run  
By the triple Hecate's team,  
From the presence of the Sun,  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now are frolic : not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallow'd house :  
I am sent with broom before,  
To sweep the dust behind the door.

390

*Enter the King and Queen of Fairies, with all their Train.*

OBERON. Through the house give glimmering light,  
By the dead and drowsy fire ;  
Every elf and fairy sprite  
Hop as light as bird from brier ;  
And this ditty, after me,  
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

TITANIA. First, rehearse this song by rote,  
To each word a warbling note :  
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,  
Will we sing, and bless this place.

400

*[Song and dance.]*

OBERON. Now until the break of day  
Through this house each fairy stray.  
To the best bride-bed will we,  
Which by us shall blessed be ;  
And the issue there create  
Ever shall be fortunate.

So shall all the couples three  
Ever true in loving be ;  
And the blots of Nature's hand  
Shall not in their issue stand ;      410  
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,  
Nor mark prodigious, such as are  
Despised in nativity,  
Shall upon their children be.  
With this field-dew consecrate,  
Every fairy take his gait ;  
And each several chamber bless,  
Through this palace, with sweet peace ;  
And the owner of it, blest,  
Ever shall in safety rest.      420  
Trip away ; make no stay :  
Meet me all by break of day.

*[Exeunt King, Queen, and the Fairy  
Train.]*

PUCK. If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended, —  
That you have but slumber'd here  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend :  
If you pardon, we will mend.      430  
And, as I am an honest Puck,  
If we have unearned luck  
Now to scape the serpent's tongue,

We will make amends ere long ;  
Else the Puck a liar call :  
So, good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands, if we be friends, 437  
And Robin shall restore amends. [Exit.

## TEXTUAL NOTES.

---

### ACT I. — SCENE I.

7. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **night**. Which is better ?

8. *Q<sub>2</sub>* has **Foure dales**. Which is right ?

10. Rowe proposed the reading **New bent**, — to which Dyce contributed a hyphen, — for the **Now bent** of the original texts. Search out the various references to moonlight through the play ("find out moonshine, find out moonshine"), and, by comparison of these, determine whether the moon was crescent or full, "now bent" or presently to be "new-bent," at this opening of the action.

27. Original texts read **bewitch'd** (*F.*) or **bewitcht** (*Q<sub>q</sub>*). To give smoothness to the verse, some editors have written **witch'd**; and others have omitted **man**. If the reading of the first folio be retained, **hath** in pronunciation should be reduced to 'th.

132. *F.* gives a defective verse, —

"For ought that ever I could reade."

*Q<sub>2</sub>* fills out the verse and gives a different order of words, —

"Eligh me; for ought that I could ever reade."

*Q<sub>1</sub>* varies from the above only in punctuation and spelling, —

"Eligh me: for aught that I could ever reade."

Johnson and others print **Ah me**. Dyce and others print **Ay me**. Defend or improve the reading of the present text.

136. Original texts read **love**, where Theobald, followed by the long line of editors, substituted **low**. Defend this emendation. Cf. : —

"Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend :

It shall be waited on with jealousy,

Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end,

Ne'er settled equally, but high or low,

That all love's pleasure shall not match his woe."

*Venus and Adonis*, 1136-1140.

139. The quartos read **friends** here, where the folios read **merit**. Examine the two readings carefully.

143. The quartos have **momentany**, apparently an earlier form of the word.

"**Momentany** and '**momentary**' were each indifferently used in Shakespeare's time. We prefer the reading of the Folio, because **momentary** occurs in four other passages of our poet's dramas; and this is a solitary example of the use of **momentany**, and that only in the Quartos. The reading of the Folio is invariably '**momentary**.'" — KNIGHT.

159. Q<sub>q</sub> read **remote** Which is better?

159-160. Johnson and other editors transpose these lines. Why? On what grounds may the original reading be defended?

167. The quarto reading is here retained. Ff. have **for a morne**. Compare Chaucer, "**Knightes Tale**," line 1500, —

"And for to doon his observance to May."

182. Q<sub>q</sub> read **your faire**. Which is better?

187. Original texts have **Your words I catch**. Hamner amended to **Yours would I catch**, — a reading reluctantly adopted here. Yet compare Knight, — "It is in the repetition of the word **fair** that Helena catches the words of Hermia; but she would also catch her voice, her intonation, and her expression as well as her words."

188. Lettsom proposed as emendation: —

"My hair should catch your hair."

Deighton suggests: —

"My fair should catch your fair."

Is either of these an improvement on the original reading?

200. The reading of the first quarto, preferred here to the folio reading, —

"His folly Helena is none of mine."

Yet can the folio reading be defended?

207. Again the reading of the first quarto in place of the folio reading **into hell**. Why is the quarto phrase preferred?

216. Original texts have **sweld**. Theobald's emendation.

219. Original texts have **strange companions**. This emendation, too, is due to Theobald.

225. Folio reading is **dotes**. How is the quarto reading, given in the present text, better?

229. Folio reads **doth** in place of the quarto reading **do**.

239. Quarto reading, **he is so oft beguill'd**, preferred to folio reading, **he is often beguill'd**. Why?

248. Folio reads **his** for **this**.

## SCENE II.

10. Q<sub>4</sub> read **grow to a point**. Which is better?

23. Q<sub>4</sub> read **gallant**. Which is better?

28. Punctuation modern, following Theobald's emendation. The original texts have **To the rest yet**, perhaps not an error, but signifying **To the rest now**.

52-53. *Thisne, Thisne*.

"These words are printed in italic in the old copies, as if they represented a proper name, and so 'Thisne' has been regarded as a blunder of Bottom's for Thisbe. But as he has the name right in the very next line it seems more probable that 'Thisne' signifies 'in this way'; and he then gives a specimen of how he would aggravate his voice." — WRIGHT.

"In Mrs. Centlivre's 'Platonick Lady,' IV. i. [1707,] Mrs. Dowdy 'enters drest extravagantly in French Night cloaths and Furbelows,' and says: 'If old Roger Dowdy were alive and zeen me thisen, he wou'd zwear I was going to fly away.'" — FURNESS.

"The name is the first word that he [Bottom] has to utter in this his first attempt to speak in a 'monstrous little voice.' For an instant, may be, it plays him false, then by the next line he has recovered himself." — VERITY.

65. Q<sub>4</sub> have **here** in place of **there**. Which is better?

92. The quartos admit of the reading [hyphens modern] **French-crown-colour**. Is it better?

99. Q<sub>1</sub> has **will wee**. Which is better?

105. Q<sub>1</sub> has **most**. Which is better?

105-106. Modern editors have undertaken to assign **Take pains**; **be perfect**; **adieu** to Quince instead of Bottom. "Plausible though this present emendation be, it is doubtful if an assumption of the manager's duty be not characteristic of Bottom." — FURNESS.



## ACT II. — SCENE I.

The initial stage-direction in the original texts reads: **Enter a Fairie at one doore, and Robin good-fellow at another.**

3 and 5. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **thorough**, — an Elizabethan spelling for **through**. "Shakespeare uses either as suits the measure." — **ROLFE**. Which gives the more musical effect here?

7. Some editors, finding this verse unmusical to their ears, have substituted for **moon's** the Anglo-Saxon genitive, which prevailed long in English poetry, **moones**. Cf. Spenser's "Faery Queene," III. i. 15: —

"And eke through fear as white as whales bone."

Compare, too, "Love's Labour's Lost," V. ii. 332, where the original texts read: —

"To shew his teeth as white as whales bone."

Other editors of unsatisfied ear read **moony**, an allowable Elizabethan phrase, used in Sidney's "Arcadia." But many editors find a charm in the fairy freedom of the cadence. How should the verse, as printed in the present text, be read? — **ABBOTT**, § 484.

33. Here the folio reading **spirit** is discarded for the **sprite** of the first quarto. Why?

34. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **not you**. Which is better?

35. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **villageree**, usually adopted by modern editors in the slightly modified form **villagery**. Either word is unique. Which is the more musical here?

35-39. Modern editors have ventured changes in the verb-forms here, either dropping the **s** from **frights** or adding an **s** to each of the five verbs in like construction following. (See **ABBOTT**, §§ 224, 415.)

42. Scan the line. To fill out the measure, it has been variously suggested that Puck's reply open with **I am, The same, Indeed**, the only endurable one of these suggestions being the word **Fairy**. But the pause was probably intentional on the poet's part, to give Puck time to strike an impressive attitude. — **ABBOTT**, § 506.

46. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **filly**, which most modern editors adopt. But **Halliwel** and **Furness** hold to **silly**, "in the sense of simple." Why not?

58. Some modern editors read **room** now and others make **room**. How should the verse, as it stands, be read?

61. The original texts have **Fairy**, changed by Theobald to **Fairies**. Why?

65. Here the reading of the quartos, **hast**, is preferred to the **wast** of the folio. Why?

91. Q<sub>q</sub> read **pelting**=**paltry**. Cf. :—

“Like to a tenement or pelting farm.”

*Richard II.*, II. i. 60.

“Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills.”

*King Lear*, II. iii. 18.

“Every pelting, petty officer.”

*Measure for Measure*, II. ii. 112.

101. This verse is a standing puzzle to the commentators. The time is apparently hard on Mayday. The King and Queen of the fairies had their quarrel in “middle Summer’s spring.” If the quarrel was in the year of these events which make up our play, one is tempted to adopt Keightley’s guess and read **summer** for **winter**, understanding **want** in the sense of **lack**. If the quarrel was of the year preceding, or even earlier date, the lines require no emendation, supposing that by **winter** is meant the normal winter, whose nights are blessed with Christmas carol or with grateful hymn for garnered harvest, and that by **here** is meant **in this region**. If emendation is desired, the following suggestions might be considered :—

“I once suspected it should be **want their winter cheer**.”

THEOBALD.

“It is barely possible that **want** is a misprint for **chant**, and that Titania, wishing to contrast the gloom of the spurious, with the merriment of the real, Winter, says, ‘when their Winter is here, the human mortals chant ; but now no night is blessed with hymn or carol’ ; and that we should read :—

**The human mortals chant, — their winter here.**” — WHITE.

109. Original texts have **chinne**, for which Tyrwhitt happily conjectured **thin**.

133. Q<sub>q</sub> have **doe I**. Which is better?

141. Pope changed **Fairies** to **Elves**. Is such change necessary?

173. **round** is supplied from Q<sub>1</sub>. Why?

180. *Q*<sub>1</sub> has **from of** = **from off**. Which reading is the better?

187. The original texts have **stay** and **stayeth**. How would such a reading be interpreted? The present emendation, made by Thirlby, has been criticised as giving too bloodthirsty a spirit to Demetrius. Is there justification elsewhere in the play for the amended reading?

199. *Q*<sub>1</sub> has **you**. Which is better?

217. The original texts change the meaning here by a different punctuation, putting a colon after **privilege** and connecting **for that** (= because) with what follows. Which reading is the better?

235. *Q*<sub>1</sub> reads **the field**. Which is better?

240. Here the folio reading, **I**, is rejected for the reading of the quartos, **Ile**. Which is better?

#### SCENE II.

2. Theobald proposed **'fore** instead of **for**. Warburton would substitute **the midnight** for **a minute**. Would fairy commentators find these emendations necessary?

14. Here the reading of the first quarto **in our** is substituted for that of the folio **in your**. Why?

48. *Q*<sub>1</sub> reads **wee can** for **can you**. Which is better?

49. *Q*<sub>q</sub> read **interchained**. Which is better?

67. *Q*<sub>1</sub> has **found**. Which is better?

77. Various emendations have been proposed to render this verse smoother. Is the feeling it expresses smooth? How should it be read?

104. *F*<sub>1</sub> reads **her**, corrected in later folios to **here**. Some editors have understood this reading **her shewes art** as an error of the printer for **shewes her art**. How does this affect the meaning of the passage? The quartos read : —

**Transparent Helena, nature shewes art.**

113. *Q*<sub>1</sub> omits the **now**. Is this necessary for musical effect?

#### ACT III. — SCENE I.

12. **By'r lakin** = By our ladykin, referring with a touch of affectionate familiarity to the Virgin Mary. *Ff.* and *Q*<sub>2</sub> spell **Berlaken**. *Q*<sub>1</sub> spells **Berlakin**.

65. **And let him** is emended from the **or let him** of the original texts. Why?

80-83. For the obvious deficiencies in sense and rhyme of this quatrain, various emendations have been proposed, but the wisest interpreter of Bottom is Puck, with his emendation of an ass's head. Bottom might well be likened to Dogberry, especially in this passage, were it not that "Comparisons are odorous." — *Much Ado about Nothing*, III. v. 18.

99. Malone proposed the following punctuation :—

**If I were, fair Thisbe, I were only thine.**

This is doubtless what the author of the interlude should be supposed to have written, but it was not in Bottom, any more than in the Prologue (Act V. Scene I), to "stand upon points." Consider, too, Bottom's transformation, comically emphasized by this his first utterance.

124. The folio reading **Wren** and is rejected for the **Wren** with of' the quartos. Why?

134-137. The arrangement of lines here is that of the first quarto. In the folios and the second quarto verse 137 follows verse 134. How does the sense differ in the two readings?

199. The folio reading **weepe everle** must give place here to the **weepes** of the first quarto. What is the meaning of the verse?

201. The original texts read **lovers tongue**. Justify the emendation.

## SCENE II.

48. The emendation **knee-deep** for the **deep** has been proposed. With which reading is the word **plunge** more appropriate? Cf. :—

"PROTEUS. That's a deep story of a deeper love;  
For he was more than over shoes in love.

VALENTINE. 'Tis true; for you are over boots in love,  
And yet you never swum the Hellespont."

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. i. 24-27.

"I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

*Macbeth*, III. iv. 136-138.

57. Pope proposed **dread** for **dead**. But cf. :—

"Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,  
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone,  
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night."

*2 Henry IV.*, I. i. 71.

64. Q<sub>1</sub> reads **I had**. Is there any choice ?

69. The reading of the folio **a lookt** is here rejected for the **have lookt** of the quartos. Yet can anything be said in support of the folio text ?

80-81. The original texts are confused here, reading :—

**And from thy hated presence part I ; see me no more.  
Whether he be dead or no.**

The emendation is Pope's. Who suggests a better ?

145. The **all are** of the quartos is substituted here for the **are all** of the folio. Why ?

151. The **were men** of the quartos is substituted here for the **are men** of the folio. Why ?

172. Q<sub>1</sub> has **is it**. Which is better ?

173. **Helen**, which does not occur in the folio text, is here supplied from that of the first quarto. But consider the following note : "If one likes the pronunciation of 'Helen' with the accent on the last syllable, there can be no objection to following the Q<sub>1</sub> here. But where a line is divided between two speakers, the inevitable pause is, I think, to be preferred in scansion to the stop-gag of an ill-accented word."—FURNESS.

175. **Aby** is the reading of the first quarto, but appears to be correct, signifying **pay for**. The folio has **abide**. Cf. :—

"Yet thou, false squire, his fault shalt deare aby."

SPENSER, *Faery Queene*, IV. i. 53.

182. The reading of the first folio **that sound** gives place here to the quarto reading **thy sound**. Why ?

201. Various emendations have been suggested for filling out the line, as **O and is all, O, is all now, O, now, is all, Oh, is this all**, etc. Consider the following note : "The break in the line gives ample pause for supplying a lost syllable. Moreover, the emotion expressed by 'O' can easily prolong the sound enough to fill the gap."—FURNESS.

213. The original texts read **first life**, an obvious error, "Helen exemplifies her position by a simile, — 'we had **two of the first**, i.e. **bodies**, like the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as **one person**, but which, like our **single heart**, have but **one crest**.'"—DOUCE.

243. Q<sub>1</sub> has *my*. Which is better?

250. The original texts have *praise*, for which, at Theobald's instance, *prayers* has been generally substituted. "Capell, at Theobald's suggestion, read 'prays,' a noun formed from the verb in accordance with Shakespeare's usage. So 'entreats' for 'entreaties,' 'exclaims' for 'exclamations.'" — WRIGHT.

257-258. This is the reading of the folio, save that the verses are differently divided there :—

No, no, Sir, seeme to breake loose;  
Take on as you would follow,  
But yet come not:

Lettson, retaining the folio reading, supplies *you* after *Sir*, and Hudson supplies *do*.

The text of the quartos, modernized, reads :—

No, no, he'll  
Seeme to breake loose; take on as you would follow,  
unless, indeed, the word *hee*le (Q<sub>1</sub>) or *hee'l* (Q<sub>2</sub>) allow the interpretation, proposed by Wilson :—

hell  
Seems to break loose; take on as you would, fellow!

"With the majority of editors I think the whole line is addressed to Lysander, but I do not think that 'No, no, Sir' has any reference to Hermia's having been called an 'Ethiop.' Demetrius shows no such zeal when Lysander afterward showers opprobrious epithets on the damsel. To my ears 'No, no, Sir' is a taunting sneer, in modern street-language, 'No you don't! You can't come that game over me!' and Lettson's emendation follows well: "You merely seem to break loose," etc." — FURNESS.

264 Q<sub>1</sub> reads: *O* hated potion hence. Is *potion* or *poison* more in keeping with the general sense of the passage? Is it a necessary emendation, — made by modern editors, — to omit the *O*?

279. Is emendation desirable here? If so, what? What omission is possible? What transposition?

282. Is emendation desirable here? If so, what?

289. The original texts read *why* so? What is the difference in meaning?

335. The folio has *abide*, but both quartos read *aby*. See note on line 175 of this scene.

346. Here for the reading of the folio *willingly* is substituted the *willfully* of the quartos. Why?

374. The folio reads *imply*. How is it evident that the first quarto, reading *imploy*, is right?

414. Folio reading *he's* rejected for *he is* of the first quarto. Why?

425. The *now* is supplied from the first quarto. Why?

#### ACT IV.—SCENE I.

22-23. Is it *Cavalery Cobweb* to whom Bottom means to allude? How is *Cavalery Cobweb* already occupied? "Unless you will solve it this way, that Cobweb laughs and goes out, but joins the other in scratching; and this, indeed, is the likeliest, for Peaseblossom would stand but sorrowly there."—CAPELL.

36. The word *thence* is an addition of the commentators to fill out the line.

49. The first folio reads *savors*, apparently less appropriate here than *favours*, the reading of the first quarto. Why so?

60. Dyce, followed by Hudson and others, prints *fairies* for the original reading *Fairy*. Is this change necessary?

71. The quartos omit the first *thou*. Which is better?

80. Here the folio *his head* is rejected for the *this head* of the first quarto. Why?

82. The first two folios and the quartos read:—

**Then common sleepe; of all these, fine the sense.**

If this be correct, *fine* is used either as signifying *lay a fine on* and therefore *diminish their consciousness*, or in the sense of *refine*, which must mean *make more acute*. The later folios printed *find the sense*. But is it the mission of the music to waken the sleepers or in any way sharpen their sense? Thirlby and Theobald suggested the reading now generally accepted, omitting the semicolon and substituting for *fine* or *find* the word *five*. Who are the five sleepers?

84. The word *Now* is here supplied from the first quarto. Why?

90. Q<sub>1</sub> reads *prosperity*. Which is better?

107. Pope and other editors would omit *let them*. Is this change necessary?

113. "Hanmer substituted 'boar' for 'bear'; but the references to 'bear' and 'bear-hunting' in Shakespeare are sufficiently numerous to justify the old reading, without going into the naturalist's question whether there are bears in Crete. See, for instance, 'Venus and Adonis,' 884 :—

'For now she knows it is no gentle chase,  
But the blind boar, rough bear, or lion proud.'

"Besides, according to Pliny (VIII. 83) there were neither bears nor boars in the island. We may therefore leave the natural history to adjust itself, as well as the chronology which brings Cadmus with Hercules and Hippolyta into the hunting field together." — WRIGHT.

131. The folio reading of *this* is here rejected for the first quarto text of *their*. Why?

152-153. The first quarto suggests an interrupted sentence :—

Was to be gon from Athens: where we might  
Without the perill of the Athenian lawe.

Which is better?

163. Here the reading of the folio followed is rejected for the following of the first quarto. Why?

166. Various emendations, *is melted as, all melted as, melted as melts*, have been suggested. Why? Is emendation necessary? — ABBOTT, § 486.

174. Here *Now* is substituted, on the suggestion of Dr. Furness, for the *But* of the original texts. Why?

175. *Q<sub>1</sub>* reads *I doe*. Which is better?

178. *Q<sub>1</sub>* reads *we more will here* and *Q<sub>2</sub>* reads *we will heare more*. Which of the three original readings is the best?

186. Several modern editors insert *my* before *Hippolyta*. Why?

192-193. The question :—

Are you sure  
That we are awake?

is supplied from the quartos. Capell and others read :—

But are you sure  
That we are well awake?

216. Here Walker's emendation of a play to our play has been adopted. Why?



218. Here Theobald's emendation of **at her death** to **after death** has been adopted.

"At her death? At whose? In all Bottom's speech there is not the least mention of any she-creature to whom this relative can be coupled. I make not the least scruple, but Bottom, for the sake of a jest and to render his **Voluntary**, as we may call it, the more gracious and extraordinary, said, 'I shall sing it **after death**.' He, as Pyramus, is killed upon the scene, and so might promise to rise again at the conclusion of the Interlude and give the duke his dream by way of a song. The source of the corruption of the text is very obvious. The **f** in **after** being sunk by the vulgar pronunciation, the copyist might write it from the sound, **a'ter**, which, the wise editors not understanding, concluded two words were erroneously got together; so splitting them, and clapping in an **h**, produced the present reading, 'at her.'" — THEOBALD.

#### SCENE II.

31. The word **right** is supplied from the quartos. Why?

#### ACT V.—SCENE I.

42. The reading of the first quarto **ripe** is substituted here for the folio reading **rife**. Why?

44-58. The quartos differ from the folio in giving both reading and comments to Theseus.

59. Is this verse satisfactory in cadence? Scan. Abbott, § 477. Is it satisfactory in sense? What is the antithesis between **strange** and **snow**? Examine these few of the proposed emendations, — **wondrous scorching snow, wondrous strange black snow, wondrous seething snow, wondrous swarthy snow, wondrous sable snow, wondrous sooty snow, wondrous strange! jet snow.**

91-92. Abbott proposed the reading (§ 510) : —

"And what poor duty cannot do, **but would**,  
Noble respect takes **not** in might **but merit**."

Although distinguished critics, including Johnson, Coleridge, and Halliwell, incline toward this interpretation, the latest editors hold by the original text.

"There is no need for change ; the sense being, noble respect or consideration accepts the effort to please without regard to the merit of the performance. Compare 'Love's Labour's Lost, V. ii. 517 :—

'That sport best pleases that doth least know how.'—WRIGHT.

"The difficulty here has arisen, I think, in taking *might* in the sense of *power*, *ability*, rather than in the sense of *will*; Kenrick states the meaning concisely when he says it is about the same as taking 'the will for the deed.'—FURNESS.

**Re-enter Prologue.** F. has here a direction which has long puzzled the commentators : **Tawyer with a Trumpet before them**; but the researches of Halliwell have made it clear that Tawyer is a proper name. "William Tawier" was "Mr. Hemnige's man;" i.e., a subordinate in the pay of John Heminge, one of Shakespeare's fellow-players in the theatrical company known first as the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, and, after the accession of James, as the King's Servants. It will be remembered that Heminge, with another of Shakespeare's fellow-actors, Henry Condell, brought out, seven years after the poet's death, the first folio edition of his collected plays, "onely to keepe the memory of so worthy a Friend, & Fellow, alive." That this Tawyer spoke the argument of the interlude is not proof positive that he had consistently played the part of Peter Quince throughout the play. The value of Halliwell's discovery is the addition of another link to the chain of indications that the first folio was printed from a stage-copy.

156. Q<sub>q</sub> have Flute. Which is right ?

161. Hudson prints loam, comparing this passage with Wall's speech a little further on, and with Bottom's suggestion in III. i. 64. White thinks that in both these cases the word should be lme. Notice the question of Theseus after Wall's recitation and Thisbe's address to Wall. Which is it, lme or loam, that Wall would naturally "have about him" ?

163-164. What is amiss with Wall's rhymes? Cf. 159-160.

"We believe that the defective rhyming was intentional, to denote the slipshod style of the doggerel that forms the dialogue in the Interlude, which we have always cherished a conviction Shakespeare intended to be taken as written by Peter Quince himself."—The COWDEN-CLARKES.

174. Q<sub>q</sub> read ô sweete, ô lovely wall. Which is better ?

185. *Q<sub>4</sub>* read **enter now**. Which is better ?

206. *F.* reads **morall**. *Q<sub>4</sub>* read **Moon used**. Commentators have loyally striven to see in the one reading a reference to the restraint imposed by Wall upon the lovers, and in the other an indication that Moonshine is about to take part in the dialogue. But Pope's emendation, **mural**, is doubly supported by the reply of Demetrius and the opportunity for a pun. "**Moral** was then pronounced **mo-ral**, and **mural**, as I am inclined to think, **moo-ral**." — WHITE.

"I am inclined to accept White's explanation that in the old pronunciation lay a pun, now lost, and for a pun, as Johnson said, Shakespeare would lose the world, and be content to lose it." — FURNESS.

218. The original texts read **two noble beasts, in a man and a Lion**. Have the emendators improved the passage ? As to punctuation, Wright says: "This is the punctuation of the quartos and folios which has been altered in modern editions by putting the comma after 'in,' but as I think unnecessarily. 'In' here signifies 'in the character of ;' see IV. ii. 23." As to the choice between **man** and **moon**, Furness says: "Harness has the shrewd remark, which almost settles the question in favour of 'man,' to the effect that Theseus saw merely a man with a lantern, and could not possibly conceive that he was intended to 'disfigure Moonshine.'" But had not the Prologue already introduced Moonshine to Theseus and the rest ?

224. The emendation of the folio text here consists merely in the addition of a comma after **joiner** and of a hyphen between **lion** and **fell**, thus making the word **lion-fell**, equivalent to **lion's fell** or **lion's skin**. Another emendation is to substitute **No lion** for **A lion**. But consider this note by Furness: "Barron Field's high deserving lies in his discerning that 'fell' is a noun and not an adjective ; and that by this interpretation point is given to 'lion's dam.' For Snug to say that he is 'neither a lion nor a lioness' is, to me, pointless, but all is changed if we suppose him to say that he is a lion's skin, and only because, as such, he encloses a lion, can he be a lioness."

251. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **awearry**. Which is better ?

261. *Q<sub>1</sub>* has **for all these**. Which is better ?

270-271. Spedding would transpose these lines. Why ? Is such emendation necessary ?

274. The original texts read **beames**. The later folios emend, probably by conjecture, to **streames**. Knight suggested **gleams**,

which is, however, not elsewhere used by Shakespeare. But for what reason would it be the most effective word here ?

275. Q<sub>1</sub> reads **take of truest Thisby sight**. Which, because worse, is better ?

284. Q<sub>4</sub> have **ye**. Which is better ?

304. Instead of **Tongue**, which Halliwell thinks "too absurd to be humorous," Capell conjectures **Sun**, and Elze, **Moon**.

319. It appears that **moth** was an old spelling for **mote**; but few of the modern editors, who print **mote** here, are so consistent as to transform **Moth** the fairy into **Mote**.

320-321. This passage, **he for . . . bless us**, is taken from the quartos, with the change of **warnd** to **warrant**. Wright calls attention to these two words as similarly used in "As You Like It." "And for lovers lacking—God warn us!—matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss." IV. i. 77. "Your features! Lord warrant us! what features?" III. iii. 5. The omission of this passage in the folios is probably due to the decree of 1605, which imposed a fine of ten pounds on any player who should "jestingly or prophanelly" speak the divine name on the stage. [For full text of this decree see my edition of "The Merchant of Venice," textual notes, I. ii. 106-107.]

324. The original texts have **meanes**. Theobald emended to **moans**. It is true, however, that there was an old word **mene** or **meane**, signifying to complain or lament :—

"If you should die for me, sir knight,  
There's few for you will meane;  
For mony a better has died for me,  
Whose graves are growing green."

*Border Minstrelsy*, III. 276.

359. Here the reading of the quartos **hangd** is substituted for the folio reading **hung**. Why ?

372. The original texts have **beholds**. Cf. "'Tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon."—"As You Like It," V. ii. 119. It is quite possible, however, for Shakespeare to say something that he has not said before ; but what argument is there in the context for a word expressive of sound ?

391. There is a temptation to accept here White's emendation of **Though** for **Through**. Unembarrassed by the faintness of that

glimmering light cast by the smouldering fire, the fairies are to trip with sure footing and direction through the shadowy chambers:—

“ Though the house give (but) glimmering light  
By (means of) the dead and drowsy fire,  
(Yet do you) every elf and fairy sprite,  
Hop as light as bird from brier.”

But instinct rebels against reason. It is not a fairy construction, not a lyric construction, hardly a Shakesperian construction. The two crisp imperatives of the original text are more in the style of Oberon. The picture is of dusky chambers, the dull, red glow shed from the drowsy hearth-fires contrasting with the bright, silvery moon-light glimmer of the dancing fairy forms, as they pass with song and charm before each bridal bed. By must then be taken in its simple sense of *beside*.

397. Q<sub>1</sub> has your song. Which is better?

419-420. The critics have effected a transposition here. The original text reads:—

Ever shall in safety rest,  
And the owner of it blest.

Understanding the subject to be the palace, and reading, with Malone, *E'er shall it in safety*, or, better, with Rowe, *Ever shall it safely*, or, best, with Dyce, *Ever shall't in safety*, one escapes the transposition, but is obliged to read the next line either as elliptical, or as loosely and almost awkwardly connected with its predecessor.

## GRAMMATICAL NOTES.

### ACT I.—SCENE I.

4. **lingers.** What peculiarity in this use of the verb?—ABBOTT, § 291.

39. **Be't so she will not.** Expand the expression.—ABBOTT, § 133.

50. **and within his power.** Expand.

65. **die the death.** Used by Shakespeare of a judicial execution. Cf. *Matthew* xv. 4. What is the figure of speech?

81. **whose unwished yoke.** Expand the ellipsis.—ABBOTT, § 201.

86. **either.** Is this word in right position?

104. **of.** What preposition would occur here in modern use?—ABBOTT, § 170.

111. **so much.** What would be the modern equivalent?—ABBOTT, § 275.

112. **spoke.** Modern equivalent?—ABBOTT, § 343.

113. **self-affairs.** Does Shakespeare's use of **self** differ from ours?—ABBOTT, § 20.

117. **For you.** Modern equivalent?—ABBOTT, § 149.

123. **go along.** Modern equivalent?—ABBOTT, § 30.

125. **nuptial.** Cf. :—

“His funerals shall not be in our camp.”

*Julius Cæsar*, V. iii. 105.

126. **nearly.** Is this the natural position of the adverb?—ABBOTT, § 421.

129. **How chance.** Expand the ellipsis.—ABBOTT, § 37.

130. **Belike.** “The word is unusual if not singular in form.”—WRIGHT. What is the meaning?

164. **forth.** Modern equivalent? Cf. :—

"Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun  
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east."

*Romeo and Juliet*, I. i. 128.

ABBOTT, § 156.

175-176. **broke: spoke.** Why were the Elizabethans so prone to use the curtailed form of the past participle? — ABBOTT, § 343.

181-182. **fair.** What part of speech is it in each of these four uses?

188. **My: my.** Why not **Mine: mine**? — ABBOTT, § 237.

212. **still.** What is the meaning? — ABBOTT, § 69.

225. **dote.** See textual notes.

226. **other some.** What is the modern equivalent?

231. **admiring of.** Which of the following attempts to explain the construction is the better?

"In this construction 'admiring' is a verbal noun, originally governed by a preposition 'in' or 'on,' which has disappeared, but which exists sometimes in the degraded form 'a,' in such words as 'a hunting,' 'a building.'" — WRIGHT.

"I take 'admiring' as a present participle, and 'of' as the redundant preposition found in Elizabethan English with many verbs." — VERITY.

242. **eyne.** Why does Shakespeare use this form? Is it allowable in modern English? Are kindred forms still allowable? "Notwithstanding the great changes which took place in the language during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many traces, though generally in a corrupted shape, still remained of the older forms and constructions." — HALLIWELL.

245. **So.** What is the modern equivalent? — ABBOTT, § 66.

246. **go tell.** What is the modern equivalent?

251. **To have.** What use of the infinitive? — ABBOTT, § 349.

"We still retain," etc. ABBOTT, § 356.

**his sight.** Expand the expression.

## SCENE II.

2. **You were best.** What is the case of **You**? — ABBOTT, § 230.

67. **give it me.** Expand.

**slow of study.** Is this a modern construction?

70. **roar, that.** Supply the ellipsis. — ABBOTT, § 283.

81-82. **roar you.** What is the construction of **you**? — ABBOTT, § 220.

82. an 'twere. What is the meaning? Cf. :—

“He will weep you, an 'twere a man born in April.”

*Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 189.

# ACT II.—SCENE I.

9. To dew. What use of the infinitive is this?—ABBOTT, § 356.

10-12. be. Why not are?—ABBOTT, § 300.

14. go seek. Expand. Cf. I. i. 246 above.

24. would. Meaning what?—ABBOTT, § 329.

30. square, that. What is the ellipsis?—ABBOTT, § 283.

35-39. sometimes: sometime. “Both forms of the word were used indifferently; and in the present case the instinctive perception of euphony, which was so constant a guide of Shakespeare's pen, and in this play, perhaps more so than in any other, seems to have determined the choice.”—WHITE.

For the verbs, see Abbott, §§ 224, 415.

56. waxen. Students of Chaucer will recognize the East Midland plural.—ABBOTT, § 332.

72. must be. Is there any idea of compulsion here?—ABBOTT, § 314.

83-87. Met: hast disturb'd. What of this sequence of tenses?—ABBOTT, § 347.

91. Hath. Is this in accordance with modern rules of grammar? With Elizabethan usage?

“A distinguished modern philologist is of opinion that although Shakespeare may have used this inaccurate construction both in speaking and writing, yet that the circumstance may be attributed to the influence of custom, and that, had the question been asked, he would have readily admitted that the phraseology was erroneous. But a careful examination of a large number of writings of the sixteenth century has convinced me that this idiom . . . was really in serious use by cultivated authors.”—HALLIWELL.—ABBOTT, § 247.

95. his. What was the Elizabethan usage as regards its and it?—ABBOTT, § 228.

117. original. “Used by Shakespeare as a noun here and in ‘I. Hen. VI., IV. ii. 47; nowhere as an adjective.’—ROLFE.



135. **intend you stay.** What is omitted ? — ABBOTT, § 349.
143. **thou shalt not from this grove.** How is the ellipsis here to be explained ? — ABBOTT, § 405.
144. **Look back for the use of you and thee in the elfin quarrel.**
146. **Since.** What is the modern equivalent ? — ABBOTT, § 132.
155. **by.** Meaning what ? — ABBOTT, § 145.
156. **smartly.** "Used by Shakespeare only here." — ROLFE.
157. **As it.** What is omitted ? — ABBOTT, § 107.
158. **might.** Meaning what ? — ABBOTT, § 312.
168. **or man or woman.** Modern equivalent ? — ABBOTT, § 136.
169. **it sees.** What is Shakespeare's difficulty here ? Has our modern English found any better solution ?
176. What is missed from this clause ? — ABBOTT, § 244.
179. **it.** What is the construction ? — ABBOTT, § 242.
191. **get thee gone.** What use of the verb have we here, and how may such use be explained ? — ABBOTT, § 296.
192. **You.** "If Shakespeare indicated shades of meaning by the use of *thou* and *you* (and sometimes I am inclined, so difficult or so fanciful is the analysis, to think he did not always so indicate them) it would be interesting to note in this dialogue the varying emotions of love, contempt, respect, and anger that flit over the speakers and find expression in these personal pronouns." — FURNESS. — ABBOTT, §§ 231-235.
196. **fair.** What part of speech here ?
198. **nor I cannot.** Students of early English will recognize the double negative in its natural use as giving emphasis. — ABBOTT, § 406.
- "This idiom was even used by Bentley in his letter on Phalaris, and is still retained in many of the provincial dialects, as well as in the vulgar phraseology of the metropolis." — HALLIWELL.
- Cf. : —
- "O horror ! horror ! horror ! Tongue nor heart  
 " Cannot conceive, nor name thee." — *Macbeth*, II. iii. 61-62.
205. **worser.** This happily irregular form is used by Shakespeare both as adjective and adverb. Cf. : —
- "O, throw away the worser part of it." — *Hamlet*, III. iv. 157.
- "I cannot hate thee worser than I do."  
*Antony and Cleopatra*, II. v. 90.

234. **But I shall.** Meaning what ?

241. **To die.** What use of the infinitive is this ? — ABBOTT, § 356.

242. **Fare thee well.** Is this absolutely grammatical ? What relation does it bear to the modern equivalent ? — ABBOTT, § 212.

263. **fond on her.** "Nearly all the particles were formerly employed in senses and positions altogether different from what would now be considered accurate. Even as late as the last century, many of them were very licentiously used by some of the best writers ; but, in works of Shakespeare's time, there is scarcely a preposition, conjunction, or adverb, that is not to be found in almost every possible variety of meaning and situation." — HALLIWELL. — ABBOTT, §§ 180, 181.

264. **look thou meet.** What use of the Subjunctive ? — ABBOTT, § 369.

265. **shall.** Would this be correct in modern usage ? — ABBOTT, § 315.

#### SCENE II.

35. **with.** What is the meaning here ? — ABBOTT, § 193.

61. **alter.** What use of the Subjunctive ? — ABBOTT, §§ 364, 365. What similar uses in the lines following ?

67. **find.** See textual notes.

73. **Despised.** What is omitted ? — ABBOTT, § 244.

87. **I alone will go.** Is this the natural order ? Would it be allowable in modern English ? — ABBOTT, §§ 420, 421.

89. **lesser.** Used by Shakespeare both as adjective and adverb. Cf. with this, —

"Some say he's mad ; others, that lesser hate him,  
Do call it valiant fury." — *Macbeth*, V. ii. 13-14.

118. **ripe not.** What part of speech is **ripe** here ?

What reason or reasons for the position of **not** ?

126. **nor never.** Why the double negative here ?

133-134. **of: of.** How may this use of **of** be explained ? — ABBOTT, § 170.

What similar instances in Lysander's following speech ?

149. **eat.** "The same form as here of the verb, and the same orthography is given elsewhere, which not only forbids us to read

ate, but accords with the supposition that the present and preterite tenses were not distinguished even in pronunciation, but both had the pure sound of e. And yet the strong preterite—ate, is, of course, the older form.”—WHITE.

153. **and if.** “This is, I think, equivalent to something more than simply **if**; it is, at least, a strongly emphasized **if**. See Abbott, § 105, which assuredly applies to the present passage.”—FURNESS.

154. **of all loves.** What is the force of **of** here?—ABBOTT, § 169.  
**I swoon almost.** Is this transposition common in Shakespeare? Is it allowable in modern English?—ABBOTT, § 29.

### ACT III.—SCENE I.

12. **parlous.** “A very common contracted form of **perilous**, used in the generic sense of **excessive**, and sometimes with the signification of **wonderful**.”—HALLIWELL.

18. **more better.** “This pleonasm is common in many writers contemporary with Shakespeare.

‘Yet were Phœbe’s locks more whiter.’

LILY’S *Euphues Golden Legacie*, 1590.”

HALLIWELL.

25. **afeard.** “Though here used as a provincialism appropriate to rustics, the word was otherwise in good use. Compare ‘The Merchant of Venice,’ II. vii. 29–30:—

‘And yet to be afeard of my deserving,  
 Were but a weak disabling of myself.’”

WRIGHT.

40. **pity of my life.** What force has **of** here?—ABBOTT, § 174.

44. **there is two.** How does the position of the subject here influence the number of the verb?—ABBOTT, § 335.

75. **a play toward.** “Toward, here, is at hand, in hand, or forthcoming. Very often used so by the Poet. Nor is the usage altogether out of date now.”—HUDSON.

119. **that they shall hear.** Is this a modern construction?—ABBOTT, § 348.

130. **set his wit to.** What is the modern idiom?

132. **never so.** What is the modern idiom?

144-145. **if I had, I have.** Is Bottom correct as to his conditional verbs? — ABBOTT, § 371.

181. **desire you of more acquaintance.** An early idiom. Cf. :—

“ I humbly do desire your grace of pardon.”

*The Merchant of Venice*, IV. i. 400.

Notice, however, that Bottom varies his expression in addressing good Master Peaseblossom (where the quartos read **you of more**), and good Master Mustard-seed.

#### SCENE II.

15. **in.** Would this use of **in** be correct in modern English? — ABBOTT, § 159.

26. **He. Who?** — ABBOTT, § 217. Cf. :—

“ Wishing me like to one more rich in hope

Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd.”

*Sonnet XXIX.* 6-7.

Chaucer makes a vigorous use of this idiom in his descriptions of a tournament and a sea-fight :—

“ He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste.

Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun goth alle.

He rolleth under foot as doth a balle.

He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,

And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun.

He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen take,

Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake.”

*The Knights Tale*, 1754-1760.

“ In with the polax presseth he and he ;

Behynd the mast beginneth he to fle,

And out agayn, and dryveth him over-borde ;

He stingeth him upon his speres orde ;

He rent the sail with hokes lyke a sythe ;

He bringeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem be blythe ;

He poureth pesen upon the hacches slider ;

With pottes full of lym they goon togider.”

*The Legend of Cleopatra*, 63-70.

36. **thou.** What is the significance in Oberon's use of the pronoun? Study, too, the use of pronouns in the following dialogue between Hermia and Demetrius.

40. **of force.** "Of necessity; used only in connection with **must.**" — ROLFE.

45. **should.** What is the force here? — ABBOTT, § 323.

90. **Of.** Is this a modern use of the preposition? — ABBOTT, § 168.

92. **that.** Meaning what? — ABBOTT, § 284.

97. **sighs of love, that costs.** Is any explanation offered of this Elizabethan idiom? — ABBOTT, § 247. Does this particular case admit of a particular explanation?

99. Is this use of **against** allowable in modern English? By what modes and tenses does Shakespeare follow it? (The text here is that of the first folio. The quartos have **doe.**) Cf. :—

"Against my love shall be as I am now."

*Sonnet LXIII. 1.*

"'Gainst that season comes." — *Hamlet*, I. i. 158.

112. **mistook.** Why is not the curtailed form of the regular past participle used here, as in **broke** and **spoke**, I. i. 175–176? — ABBOTT, § 343.

119. **needs.** Explain the formation of this adverb. — ABBOTT, § 25.

**alone.** What is the meaning here? — ABBOTT, § 18.

122. **should woo.** "Abbott, § 323, thinks that there is no other reason for the use of 'should' here than that it denotes, like **sollen** in German, a statement not made by the speaker. It may be so, and yet the idea of **ought to**, equally with **sollen**, may be imputed to it here. 'Why should you think that I **ought to** woo in scorn?' As was said in 'The Tempest' on the phrase 'where should he learn our language?' the use of 'should' in Shakespeare is of the subtlest." — FURNESS.

123. **comes.** What instances of this Elizabethan usage earlier in the play?

124–125. "Walker thinks that there is here 'an instinctive striving after a natural arrangement of words inconsistent with modern English grammar;' and Abbott, §§ 376, 417, classes, 'vows so born' either as a 'noun absolute' or as a 'participle used with the Nominative Absolute.' I cannot but think that both critics, misled by the singular 'appears,' have mistaken the construction. 'Appears' should be,

according to modern grammar, in the plural ; its subject is 'vows,' it is singular merely by attraction ; 'all truth' is the predicate, not the subject. My paraphrase, therefore, is : 'vows, thus born, appear, from their very nativity, to be all pure truth.' The next lines seem to confirm it. It can hardly be supposed that Lysander means to assert that 'all truth,' universal truth, is to be found in such vows."

— FURNESS.

Does the construction in line 123 have any bearing on the question ? Does the phrase **all truth** admit of interpretation other than that of Dr. Furness ?

153. **superpraise.** "Used by Shakespeare nowhere else." — ROLFE.

169. **none.** Meaning what ? — ABBOTT, § 53.

171. **to her.** "May not this be like a familiar Greek construction ? My heart (went away from its proper home) to her, and sojourned (with her) merely as a guest. Confirmed by : Now it has returned to me." — ALLEN.

200. **child.** "Shakespeare uses both **child** and **chidden** as the participle ; the latter always before a noun." — ROLFE.

202. **childhood.** What is the construction ? — ABBOTT, § 430.

206. **of.** What is the construction ? — ABBOTT, § 178.

Cf. note under I. i. 231.

225. **even but now.** Does this differ at all in meaning from the phrase **even now** ? — ABBOTT, § 38.

"Our last king,  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us."

*Hamlet*, I. i. 81.

239. **each at other.** What part of speech is **other** here ? — ABBOTT, § 12.

241-242. **have: would.** Does the consequent answer to the antecedent here ? Why not ? — ABBOTT, § 371.

275. **since night you loved me.** Explain the tense. — ABBOTT, § 132.

302. **right.** Meaning what ? Is this a modern use of the word ? — ABBOTT, § 19.

312. **child.** See note on verse 200 above.

314. **so.** Meaning what ? — ABBOTT, § 133.

331. **that.** What is the antecedent ? — ABBOTT, § 218.

337. *Of thine or mine, is most.* Explain the construction. — ABBOTT, § 409.

359. *As.* Meaning what? — ABBOTT, § 275.

“Compare ‘Hamlet,’ II. i. 95-96: —

‘He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk;’

where the quartos read ‘As,’ the folios ‘That.’” — WRIGHT.

365. *batty.* “Used by Shakespeare only here.” — ROLFE.

368. *his might.* What was the Elizabethan use of its? — ABBOTT, § 228.

417. *That.* Meaning what? — ABBOTT, § 283.

432. *comforts.* “This may be an accusative, the object of ‘shine;’ it may be a vocative, like ‘night;’ or it may be a nominative, with ‘shine’ as its verb; whichever the reader may think the most pathetic.” — FURNESS.

435-436. *sleep—Steal.* What would be the modern equivalent? Which is the more vigorous? — ABBOTT, §§ 364-365.

438. *makes.* Account for the form. — ABBOTT, § 333.

#### ACT IV.—SCENE I.

11. *me.* What is the case? The reason for the case?

36. *thee.* Why this pronoun? Notice the pronouns used hitherto by the different speakers in this scene.

38. *you.* Why this pronoun?

66. *other.* What is the number? — ABBOTT, § 12.

67. *May all.* What is omitted? — ABBOTT, § 399.

69. *But.* Would this be allowable in modern English? — ABBOTT, § 127.

71. *thou.* Why this pronoun?

75. *you.* Why this pronoun?

84. *thine.* Why this pronoun?

131. *of.* Explain this use of the preposition. — ABBOTT, § 174.

136. *That.* Meaning what? — ABBOTT, § 284.

140. *but.* Modifying what? — ABBOTT, § 129.

145. *To sleep.* What is omitted? — ABBOTT, § 281.

147. *Half sleep, half waking.* “Some editors regard ‘sleep’ and ‘waking’ as adjectives, and print the former ‘sleep’ = asleep. Dr.

Schmidt, in his *Shakespeare Lexicon*, p. 1419, col. I., gives this as an instance of the same termination applying to two words, so that 'sleep and waking' = sleeping and waking. . . . I am inclined to think that both 'sleep' and 'waking' are here substantives, and are loosely connected with the verb 'reply.' — WRIGHT.

182. *for*. Meaning what?

## SCENE II.

9-10. *the best wit of any handicraft man*. How is this a confusion of two constructions? — ABBOTT, § 409.

14. *naught*. "So the second and later folios. The quartos and first folio have 'a thing of nought.' The two words 'naught,' signifying worthlessness, good-for-nothingness, and 'nought' nothing, are etymologically the same, but the different senses they have acquired are distinguished in the spelling." — WRIGHT.

16. *is two or three*. What explanation may be offered for this construction? — ABBOTT, § 335.

29. *I am to discourse*. What is the ellipsis? — ABBOTT, § 405.

34. *of me*. Meaning what? — ABBOTT, §§ 165, 166.

## ACT V. — SCENE I.

1. *that*. What is omitted? — ABBOTT, § 244.

2. *may*. Meaning what? — ABBOTT, § 307.

21. *imagining*. Construction? — ABBOTT, § 378.

27. *howsoever*. Expand the expression. — ABBOTT, § 47.

43. *of*. Is the preposition needed here? — ABBOTT, § 179.

69. What is the ellipsis? — ABBOTT, § 399.

73. *Which*. Would the pronoun *who* here convey any different shade of meaning? — ABBOTT, § 266.

76. *And*. Of what force in passages like this? — ABBOTT, § 97.

98. *have broke*. What is omitted? — ABBOTT, § 399.

What explanation is given of such a form as *broke*? — ABBOTT, § 343.

142. *fall*. How is this use of the verb to be explained? — ABBOTT, § 291.

208-209. *so wilful to hear*. What is the ellipsis? — ABBOTT, § 281.



246. **the greatest error of all the rest.** What is amiss with this construction ? — ABBOTT, § 409.

313. **How chance.** See note on I. i. 129.

319-320. / **which Pyramus, which Thisbe.** How is **which** to be understood in this connection ? — ABBOTT, § 273.

341. **shore.** Better poets than Peter Quince have been known to sacrifice grammar to rhyme. **Shore** is used by Shakespeare, however, in serious tragedy.

"Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief  
Shore his old thread in twain."

*Othello*, V. ii. 205-206.

359. **writ.** "The common form of the preterite in Shakespeare, who seldom uses 'wrote.' " — WRIGHT.

367. **palpable-gross.** What is the relation of the first adjective to the second ? — ABBOTT, § 2.

374. **fordone.** What is the force of the prefix here ? "'For,' like the German *ver*, has a negative sense in composition, as 'forget,' 'forgo,' 'fobear,' 'forbid,' 'forswear.' Sometimes also, like *ver*, it is intensive, as in 'forgive,' 'forwearied,' 'forspent.' " — WRIGHT.

380. **That.** Meaning what ? — ABBOTT, § 284.

**graves.** What is the construction ?

396. **dance it.** What is the construction of **it** ? — ABBOTT, § 226.

405. **create.** "This form of participle in words derived from the Latin is of frequent occurrence." — WRIGHT.

What second example may be found in Oberon's address ? For further examples see Abbott, § 342.

## LITERARY NOTES.

---

### ACT I. — SCENE I.

**Athens.** Why did Shakespeare lay the scene of a fairy play at Athens?

**Theseus.** What is the classic story of Theseus? How does his opening speech strike the keynote of the drama? What word does he use that is to recur again and again? What word also prophetic of the play is found in the first speech of Hippolyta?

5-6. Explain this passage by reference to the two following:—

"I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead."—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, I. i. 234.

"Ut piget annus  
Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum,  
Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora."

HORACE, *Epist.* I. i. 21.

"Slow seames the yeare unto the warde  
Which houlden downe must be,  
In custodie of stepdame straites,—  
Slowe slydes the time to me."

DRANT'S translation (1567) of the above.

11. **solemnities.** What is the meaning here? Cf. IV. i. 185.

13. **pert.** What is the meaning here?

"'Pert' is still a common word in New England, used exactly in the Shakesperian sense and pronounced as it is spelled in the Q<sub>a</sub>, **peart**, i.e., **peert**."—FURNESS.

15. Compare, in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, Milton's companion figures of Mirth and Melancholy. What picture does this line suggest? What is here, and in line 19 below, the meaning of **pomp**? What is the meaning of **triumph** in line 19?

16-17. Cf. Chaucer's "Knightes Tale," 1-26.

20. Scan the verse. What is the literal meaning of the word **Duke**? Why is it amusing to find this title applied to Theseus? Cf. Skelton :—

“ Not like Duke Hamilear,  
Not like Duke Hasdrubal.”

Cf., too, Stanyhurst's mention of “ Duke Æneas ” and Haywood's of “ Duke Ajax ” and “ Duke Nestor.” It is probable that Shakespeare caught the term from Chaucer :—

“ Whylom, as olde stories tellen us,  
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus.”

*Knights Tale*, 1-2.

21. Scan the verse for the pronunciation of **Egeus**. Does he seem to be a loving and lovable father?

27. Scan the verse and, relative to the scansion, see textual notes.

28. **Thou**. Why thrice spoken in this one verse?

29. **love-tokens**. As enumerated in the lines below, how far are these in modern use?

**my child**. How often iterated in this speech? What similar expression is iterated?

31. **feigning**. What other words used by the angry father accuse Lysander of false dealing?

32. Paraphrase the line.

33. **With bracelets of thy hair**. Cf. :—

“ Once woare I bracelets made of hayre,  
And collers did approve ;  
Once wore my clothes made out of waxe,  
And then I was in love.”

*MS. Poems*. About 1600.

HALLIWELL.

**gauds**. “ Trifling ornaments, toys. Both ‘ gaud ’ and **jewel** are derived from the Latin **gaudium**; the latter coming to us immediately from the Old French **joel**, which is itself **gaudiale**.” — WRIGHT.

35. Paraphrase the line.

38. **stubborn harshness**. Is it possible that **Hermia** inherited this quality?

41. “ By a law of Solon's, parents had an absolute power of life and

death over their children. So it suited the poet's purpose well enough to suppose the Athenians had it before. Or perhaps he neither thought nor knew anything of the matter." — WARBURTON.

43. **this gentleman.** Is this an Athenian expression, consonant here with the paternal threat of violent death ?

45. **Immediately.** Expressly.

47-51. How pleasing would these sentiments naturally be to the Queen of the Amazons ?

53. What characteristic of Hermia appears in this reply ?

53-55. What characteristic of Theseus is made evident here ? Paraphrase his answer.

56-57. Is this playful, or half-playful, or fully serious ?

58-64. What characteristics of Hermia are manifest in this address ? Does she stand or kneel ?

65. See grammatical notes.

68. **Know of your youth.** What is the meaning ? Cf. :—

"Know of the duke if his last purpose hold."

*King Lear*, V. i. 1.

**your blood.** What is the meaning ? Cf. :—

"Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled."

*Hamlet*, III. ii. 74.

69. Scan the verse. — ABBOTT, § 466.

70. **livery.** What is the present meaning of the word ? Determine from this passage, II. i. 113, the passage from Milton cited under III. ii. 391 below, and those passages quoted here, the Elizabethan meaning :—

"One twelve moons more she'll wear Diana's livery."

*Pericles*, II. v. 10.

"When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery, so gaz'd on now,  
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held."

*Sonnets*, II. 1-4.

Has the meaning of the word widened or narrowed during the past three centuries ?

**nun.** What did the ancient Athenians know about nuns ?

71. Where did Theseus ever hear of a cloister ?

Why is the cloister called **shady**? What is the meaning of **mew'd**? Cf. :—

“More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,  
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.”

*Richard III.*, I. i. 132-133.

73. Note the alternate alliteration in the verse. Why are the hymns called **faint**? Why is the moon called **cold**? What picture from the mediæval world does the line bring to mind? Cf. Tennyson's “*St. Agnes*.” Cf. also Shirley's “*Song of Nuns* :”—

“O fly, my soul! what hangs upon  
Thy drooping wings,  
And weighs them down  
With love of gaudy mortal things?

The Sun is now i' the east; each shade,  
As he doth rise,  
Is shorter made,  
That earth may lessen to our eyes.”

74. Scan the verse. Is the ascetic feeling of this passage classic or mediæval?

76-78. “Theseus's meaning is clear, however much we may disagree with the sentiment, that in an earthly sense the married woman is happier than the spinster.”—FURNESS.

81. See grammatical notes. Scan the verse.

84-85. What letter does much toward making these verses so musical? What is the figure? What is the beauty of thought and feeling?

86-90. Is Theseus in earnest? What word in the passage is out of harmony with the conception of a mediæval nun? What is the finest word in poetic effect?

92. Scan the verse.

**crazed title.** “A title with a flaw in it. Compare Lyly's ‘*Euphues*’ (ed. Arber) p. 58 : ‘Yes, yes, Lucilla, well doth he knowe that the glasse once crased, will with the least clappe be cracked.’” —WRIGHT.

94. Scan the verse. On what words is the emphasis thrown? What word, that takes the emphasis of sense, appears to lack the metrical emphasis?

95. **Scornful Lysander.** Can this be called libel ?

99-110. Paraphrase Lysander's plea. What does he tell us of Helena and of her feeling for Demetrius ? Notice that we have at the outset this charge, which is not cleared away, against Demetrius. Apparently the fairies were not responsible for his first inconstancy.

111-114. Is Theseus influenced by Lysander's plea ?

What "self-affairs" have absorbed his attention ?

116. What "private schooling" would be most to the point in these two cases ?

117-118. What alliteration ?

119-121. Who makes the choice, Theseus, Egeus, or Hermia ?

122. Is it possible that the captive Queen of the Amazons has not approved of these proceedings and that her "cheer" is less sprightly than Theseus expects ?

123. See grammatical notes.

124. Scan the verse.

127. Is it by accident or design that the Duke and his Hippolyta, the irate father and the rival lover all troop out, leaving Lysander and Hermia alone ?

128-129. Does Lysander seem extremely agitated over Hermia's impending doom ?

130-131 What characteristic of Hermia is displayed in her reply ?

**Beteem.** "Give in streaming abundance." — DYCE.

132-135. Is Lysander of a practical turn of mind ?

136-140. Is there climax in Hermia's exclamations ?

Scan verse 137.

**in respect of years.**

"We have discovered recurrent traces of special features of style marking certain plays by Shakespeare, which lead us to fancy that he thought in that particular mode while he was writing that particular drama. Sometimes it is a peculiar word, sometimes a peculiar manner of construction, sometimes a peculiar fashion of employing epithets or terms in an unusual sense. Throughout the play of 'A Midsummer-Night's Dream' the word 'respect' is used somewhat peculiarly ; so as to convey the idea of 'regard' or 'consideration,' rather than the more usually assigned one of 'reverence' or 'deference.'" — THE COWDEN-CLARKES.

Cf. 160 below ; II. i. 206 (doubtful instance) ; II. i. 221 ; V. i. 91.

141-149. How does this speech of Lysander's compare in point of

poetic excellence with the preceding portion of the dialogue? Enumerate the figures and select the best. Scan the last verse. Has this verse poetic value?

**collied.** What is the meaning? Cf. *collier* and *colliery*.

**spleen.** "In a swift, sudden fit, as of passion or caprice."—**WRIGHT.** Cf. :—

"With swifter spleen than powder can enforce,  
The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope."

*King John*, II. i. 448-449.

"O, I am scalded with my violent motion,  
And spleen of speed to see your majesty!"

*King John*, V. vii. 50-51.

Compare also :—

"Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,  
Ere one can say 'It lightens.'"

*Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 119-120.

151. Scan the verse. — **ABBOTT**, § 490.

152. Scan the verse. Note the alliteration.

153. Note the alliteration.

155. Note the alliteration. What is the meaning of **fancy**? And why is fancy called **poor**? Cf. "fancy-free," II. i. 161; "fancy-sick," III. ii. 96; and "Fair Helena in fancy following me."—IV. i. 163.

See also "The Merchant of Venice," III. ii. 63-71.

158. Scan the verse for the pronunciation of **revenue**, and compare verse 6 above. — **ABBOTT**, § 490.

167. Merry England has not even in these sober times quite abandoned her beautiful old custom of welcoming in the May. At Oxford, for instance, the chorister boys, too high to be heard from below, chant from the top of Magdalen tower at five o'clock on Mayday morning, and the great throng assembled in the street beneath to assist by their presence at this inaudible rite follow it up by walking to the village of Ifley, two miles distant, for the gathering of those "purple fritillaries,"

"The grassy harvest of the river-fields,  
Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields."

The early fashion was for the boys and girls to rise soon after midnight and take their way, with carols and blowing of horns, to some

neighboring woodland, whence they returned at dawn laden with blossomed boughs of hawthorn, pink and white,—popularly known as “the May,”—and green branches of the forest trees. These were placed above the doors and windows of the houses, within and without, giving a festive look to all the town. The song of these homecoming revellers ran as follows :—

“Remember us poor Mayers all,  
And thus we do begin  
To lead our lives in righteousness,  
Or else we die in sin.

We have been rambling all this night,  
And almost all this day,  
And now returning back again  
We have brought you a branch of May.

A branch of May we have brought you,  
And at your door it stands ;  
It is but a sprout, but it's well budded out  
By the work of our Lord's hands.

The heavenly gates are open wide,  
Our paths are beaten plain,  
And, if a man be not too far gone,  
He may return again.

The moon shines bright and the stars give light,  
A little before it is day ;  
So God bless you all, both great and small,  
And send you a joyful May !”

This blending of religious feeling with the mirth and frolic of the season is reflected in the words of the old chronicler, Stowe, who tells us how on Mayday, young and old, high and low, were wont to go out into “the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind.” The wisest Shakespeare class might well pause here for recitations or readings from some of the many English poems on the May, as Chaucer's “Prologue to the Legende of Goode Women,” Herrick's “Corinna's Going a Maying,” and Wordsworth's “Odes to May.” But, after all, what has an English Mayday to do with this surprising pair of Athenian lovers ?



168-178. Is it perhaps a little over enthusiastic for Hermia—considering the doom that awaits her if she does not run away—to reply to Lysander's proposition by this rain of oaths? Note how she fits to the subject of her promise these various emblems by which she swears. Cf. :—

“Bring an oath most sylvan holy,  
And upon it swear me true—  
By the wind-bells swinging slowly  
Their mute curfews in the dew,  
By the advent of the snow-drop, by the rosemary and rue”

Mrs. BROWNING's *The Lost Bower*.

Did all Cupid's arrows have golden heads? To what use did Venus put her doves? How is the date of Æneas and Dido related to the date of Theseus and Hippolyta? What characteristic touch of sharpness in Hermia's words?

183. **lode-stars.** Polar-stars and, therefore, guiding stars—therefore, again, stars of a strong attractive influence.

184-185. Note the poetic charm of these lines so in harmony with a drama of Maytime and of youth.

186. **favour.** Aspect, personal graces.

190. **bated.** Excepted.

191. **translated.** Meaning what?

193. How is this last line more poetic than the seven lines preceding?

194-201. Is the conduct of Demetrius, under these circumstances, unnatural?

207. Are heaven and hell Athenian expressions?

209-211. What relation is assumed here between the moon and the dew? Wherein does the poetic beauty of this passage chiefly lie?

215. **faint primrose-beds.** To what does faint refer,—the color of the primroses, their fragrance, or the weariness of those who rest upon the primrose-beds? What is the color and what is the season of the English primrose?

220-221. Does Hermia appear at advantage in this farewell? Is her devotional mood sustained through the two lines?

226. Is there anything of the altruist in Helena?

230-231. Cf. :—

“Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,  
That they behold, and see not what they see?”

*Sonnets*, CXXXVII. 1-2.

232. **holding no quantity.** Bearing no right proportion to love's estimate of them.

235. **Cupid painted blind.** "This is a modern idea, no trace of it being found in the old Greek or Latin poets. Douce says that the earliest English writer who gives it is Chaucer, in his translation of the 'Roman de la Rose : ' —

' The god of love, blind as stone,'

but the line is not in the French original." — ROLFE.

242-245. Is the figure a good one ?

246. "I am convinced that Shakespeare availed himself of the title of this play in his own mind, and worked upon it as a dream throughout, but especially, and perhaps unpleasingly, in this broad determination of ungrateful treachery in Helena, so undisguisedly avowed to herself, and this, too, after the witty, cool philosophising that precedes." — COLERIDGE.

248. **intelligence.** Meaning what ?

249. **dear expense.** "Helena assuredly means that she purchases even the thanks of Demetrius at a high price, namely, at the price of fostering and furthering Demetrius's love for Hermia, and therefore of her own harm." — DELIUS.

250-251. Is the discretion of Helena equal to her dignity ? Are these Athenian manners ?

## SCENE II.

**Quince.** What sort of man does the name **Peter Quince** suggest ? What is his trade ?

**Bottom.** Is Nick Bottom, "Bully Bottom," a natural contemporary of Theseus and Hippolyta ? What is his trade ? How far is he a just representative of his trade ? Halliwell suggests that he may take his name from a "bottom " of thread : —

" A bottome for your silke it seemes  
My letters are become,  
Whiche, with oft winding off and on,  
Are wasted whole and some."

GRANGE'S *Garden*, 1577.

Cf. : —

" Beat me to death with a bottom of brown thread."

*Taming of the Shrew*, IV. iii. 138.

**Snug.** What sort of man does the name **Snug** suggest ? What is his trade ?

**Flute.** What is the trade of Francis Flute? Was that a better trade in the sixteenth century than in the nineteenth? Why did Shakespeare dub this actor **Flute**?

**Snout.** What sort of man does the name Tom Snout suggest? What is his trade?

**Starveling.** What is the trade of Robin Starveling? Has his trade anything to do with his name?

1. **our company.** "Staunton suggests the possibility that 'in the rude dramatic performance of these handicraftsmen of Athens, Shakespeare was referring to the plays and pageants exhibited by the trading companies of Coventry, which were celebrated down to his own time, and which he might very probably have witnessed.' This is not impossible, especially in view of the fact, which I do not remember to have seen noticed in connection with the present play, that midsummer eve was especially chosen as the occasion for a 'showe' or 'watche,' performed by various companies of handicraftsmen." — FURNESS.

2. **generally.** Meaning what, in Bottom's language? Note the context.

3. **scrip.** Meaning what? See just below.

6. **interlude.** Meaning what? See dictionary.

How does Quince display the pride of the author and stage-manager? How the ignorance of the "rude mechanical"?

How many suggestions does Bottom make during the scene?

11-12. **Marry.** Meaning what? Cf. "**By'r lakin**," III. i. 12. Note the saucy fling at the titles of the old-fashioned plays, as "**A lamentable Tragedie**, mixed full of pleasant Mirth, containing the Life of Cambises," or "**A new Tragical Comedie of Apius and Virginia**."

13-14. Is praise from Bottom commendation? Yet we may suppose that the sallow countenance of Peter Quince flushes with pleasure.

15. **spread yourselves.** Meaning what?

27. **condole.** "Bottom, of course, blunders, but it is impossible to say what word he intended to employ. Shakespeare uses 'condole' only once besides, and he then puts it into the mouth of Ancient Pistol, who in such matters is as little of an authority as Bottom. See 'Henry V.' II. i. 133: 'Let us condole the knight,' that is, mourn for him. In 'Hamlet,' I. ii. 93, 'condolement' signifies the expression of grief." — WRIGHT.

28-29. What is Bottom's conception of high tragedy? Has he given any indication that his "chief humour is for a tyrant"?

28. To the rest. Meaning what?

29. "Ercles is Bottom's version of Hercules. Hercules was one of the ranters and roarers of the old moral-plays; and his Twelve Labours formed a popular subject of entertainment. In Greene's 'Groatsworth of Wit,' 1592, a player tells how he had 'terribly-thundered' the Twelve Labours of Hercules. In 'Histriomastix,' 1610, some soldiers drag in a company of players; and the captain says to one of them, 'Sirrah, this is you that would rend and tear a cat upon the stage.' And in "The Roaring Girl," 1611, one of the persons is called Tear-cat. The phrase to make all split is met with repeatedly. So in Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Scornful Lady,' II. 3: 'Two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split.' Also in 'The Widow's Tears,' by Chapman, I. 4: 'Her wit I must employ upon this business to prepare my next encounter, but in such a fashion as shall make all split.'" — HUDSON.

31-38. Show that this is nonsense — that it is rant — that it is burlesque. What are raging rocks?

39. This was lofty! Where does the emphasis fall?

45. Flute's guess is worse than Bottom's.

47. play a woman. "Previously to the Restoration, the parts of women were usually performed by boys or young men. 'In stage playes, for a boy to put on the attyre, the gesture, the passions of a woman; for a meane person to take upon him the title of a Prince with counterfeite porte and traine, is by outwarde signes to shewe themselves otherwise then they are.' — Gosson's *Plays Confuted in Five Actions*, n. d. Occasional instances, however, of women appearing on the London stage occurred early in the seventeenth century. . . . According to Prynne, some women acted at the 'Blackfriars' in the year 1629, and one in the previous year. It appears from the passage in the text, and from what follows, that the actor's beard was concealed by a mask, when it was sufficiently prominent to render the personification incongruous; but a story is told of Davenant stating as a reason why the play did not commence, that they were engaged in 'shaving the Queen.'" — HALLIWELL.

52-53. Thisne. See textual notes.

55-65. Compare the list of *dramatis personæ* as here made out with the parts finally taken in the interlude. (Act. V. Scene I.)

Why is the part of Thisbe's mother given to Starveling? Why the lion's part to Snug? "Not only does Bottom propose to play

every part himself, but he anticipates the applause, and encores his own roar." — COWDEN-CLARKE.

80. **aggravate.** "The verb *aggravate* was, in all probability, considered one of the affected words of the day, and, in that case, would have a very ludicrous effect when thus misapplied by Bottom." — HALLIWELL.

81-82. **sucking dove.** Oratory has its dangers for Bottom. What is the method of Quince in managing his star actor? How does it succeed?

84. **proper.** Comely.

90-97. Bottom is ready to draw freely from his stock of false beards, or, perhaps, to die his own any shade of red or yellow, even to the golden brightness of the French coin called a crown. This gives Quince a chance for a quibble, which comes somewhat too nimbly from the plain carpenter. Such prompt allusion to the baldness induced by what was known as "the French disease" would have seemed more in keeping from Mercutio or Benedict. The double meaning in *barefaced* was perhaps not intentional on the part of the harassed manager, but there are signs that his temper was giving way. What example of anti-climax in Quince's address to the actors?

101-102. **a bill of properties.** A list of stage-requisites. Cf. :—

"He has got into our tyring-house amongst us,  
And tane a strict survey of all our properties;  
Our statues and our images of gods,  
Our planets and our constellations,  
Our giants, monsters, furies, beasts, and bugbeares,  
Our helmets, shields and vizors, haire and beards,  
Our pastbord marchpaines, and our wooden pies."

BROME'S *Antipodes*, 1640.

105. **obscenely.** Perhaps Bottom means obscurely.

108. **hold, or cut bow-strings.** "This phrase is of the proverbial kind, and was born in the days of archery : when a party was made at butts, assurance of meeting was given in the words of that phrase; the sense of the person using them being that he would 'hold' or keep promise, or they might 'cut his bow-strings,' demolish him for an archer." — CAPELL.

With how many of these "hempen home-spuns" does Bottom pass for a genius? Of what time and country is the atmosphere of the scene? Of what time and country is Bottom's type of character?

## ACT II.—SCENE I.

**Scene I.** Is it day or night ?

**Fairy.** How does the fairy look ? What is the dress, the motion, and the manner ?

**Puck.** This name, "known," says Grant White, "to all Teutonic and Scandinavian dialects," was apparently pronounced **Pook** in Shakespeare's day. Our word **spook** comes from it, a "pouke," or pixy, being in the fourteenth century an unearthly creature of disreputable sort, little better than a devil. By Shakespeare's time Puck was a partially reformed character; no longer a demon, but a mischievous, clumsy hobgoblin, with a freakish fashion of doing kindnesses to mortals one minute and playing tricks on them the next. Cowden-Clarke well describes him as "the patron saint of sky-larking." Grant White sees him in this drama as "a rough, knurly-limbed, fawn-faced, shock-pated little fellow,—a very Shetlander among the gossamer-winged, dainty-limbed shapes around him; and strong enough to knock their heads together for his elvish sport."

2-17. Does the fairy speak or sing ? What instances of alliteration ? Why is the fairy's alliteration better than Bottom's ? See textual notes for the scansion of verse 7.

**dew her orbs.** Remember, in reading the following, that Stratford was full of grandmothers.

"My grandmother has often told me of fairies dancing upon our green, and that they were very little creatures clothed in green; they would do good to the industrious people, but they pinch the sluts; they would steal children, and give one of their own in the room, and the moment any one saw them they were struck blind of one eye. All this I have heard, and my grandmother, who was a very tall woman, said she had seen several of them, which I believe, because she said so; she said, moreover, that they lived underground, and that they generally came out of a mole-hill; they had fine music always among themselves, and danced in a moonshiny night around, or in a ring, as one may see at this day upon every common in England where mushrooms grow." — *Round about our Coal-Fire*, 1734. [HALLIWELL.]

Cf. the Irish fairy-lore so charmingly set forth in W. B. Yeats' "Celtic Twilight" (Macmillan, 1894).

"In olde dayes of the King Artour,  
Of which the Bretons speken gret honour,  
All was this lond fulfilled of faerie;  
The elf-quene, with hire joly companie,

Danced ful oft in many a grene mede.  
 This was the old opinion as I rede ;  
 I speke of many hundred yeres ago ;  
 But now can no man see non elves mo."

CHAUCER'S *Wife of Bath's Tale*.

"Pynkie wals the lyttilest bairne,  
 That ever dancit on the greinne ;  
 And Pynkie wals the bonnyest thyng  
 That evir on yirthe wals seinne.

Were I to telle Lyttil Pynkie's song,  
 It might doo muckle ill ;  
 For it wals not fraimit of yirthly wordis,  
 Though it soundit sweitte and shrill.

But aye the owerworde of the song  
 Which ladyis lernit to syng,  
 Wals, 'Rounde and rounde, and sevin tymis rounde,  
 The elfyins fairye ryng !'

The firste moove that Lyttil Pynkie maide,  
 Wals gentil, softe, and sweitte ;  
 But the seconde rounde Lyttil Pynkie maide,  
 Theye colde not kenne hir feitte.

The thrydde rounde that Lyttil Pynkie maide,  
 Sho shymerit als lycht and gaye  
 Als danncyng of the wiry lychtis  
 On warme and sonnye daye.

And aye sho sang, with twyrle and spang,  
 Arounde them on the playne,  
 Quhille hir feitte theye shymerit above theyre hedis,  
 Then kissit the swairde agayne."

HOGG'S *Lyttil Pynkie*.

**cowslips tall.** Does the fairy look up or down at the cowslips ?  
**pensioners.** Shakespeare has in mind Queen Elizabeth's band of military courtiers styled Gentleman Pensioners. They were the flower of the young nobility, tall and handsome, rich and elaborate in dress ; yet for all their gold-laced coats, studded with jewels, Queen Titania's cowslips formed the brighter company.

spots. The Warwickshire boy had looked long and deep into the meadow blossoms. We hear again in "Cymbeline" of —

"the crimson drops  
I' th' bottom of a cowslip ;"

but no botanist taught him this explanation of the "rubies, fairy favours."

lob of spirits. Even so Milton

"Tells how the drudging goblin sweat  
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,  
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,  
That ten day-labourers could not end :  
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,  
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,  
Basks at the fire his hairy strength."

20. **Oberon.** "Oberon the fairy king first appears in the old French romance of Huon of Bourdeaux, and is identical with Elberich, the dwarf king of the German story of Otnit in the Heldenbuch. The name Elberich, or, as it appears in the Nibelungenlied, Albrich, was changed in passing into French first into Auberich, then into Auberon, and finally became our Oberon. He is introduced by Spenser in the Fairy Queen (bk. II. cant. I. st. 6), where he describes Sir Guyon : —

' Well could he tourney, and in lists debate,  
And knighthood tooke of good Sir Huon's hand,  
When with King Oberon he came to Faery land.' "

WRIGHT.

22. **an Indian king.** "The Oberon of the great poet's fairy-comedy, although he is set in a butterfly environment, still possesses some features very similar to those of the romantic fairy king [in "Huon of Bourdeaux"]. . . . The mediæval fairy dwells in the East ; his kingdom is situated somewhere to the east of Jerusalem, in the far-reaching district that was known to mediæval writers under the generic name of India. Shakespeare's fairy is similarly a foreigner to the Western world. He is totally unlike Puck, his lieutenant, 'the merry wanderer of the night,' who springs from purely English superstition, and it is stated in the comedy that he has come



to Greece 'from the farthest steep of India.' Titania, further, tells her husband how the mother of her page-boy gossipped at her side in their home, 'in the spiced Indian air by night-fall.' And it will be remembered that an Indian boy causes the jealousy of Oberon."—  
 LEE.

23. *Changeling*. What is the meaning? Scan the verse.

"By wells and rills, in meadows greene,  
 We nightly dance our hey-day gulse;  
 And to our fairye king, and queene,  
 We chant our moon-light harmonies.  
 When larks gin sing,  
 Away we fling;  
 And babes new-borne steal as we go,  
 An elfe in bed  
 We leave instead,  
 And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!"  
*The Pranks of Puck* (Possibly by Jonson).

"From thence a Faery thee unweeting reft,  
 There as thou slepst in tender swadling band;  
 And her base elfin brood there for thee left:  
 Such, men do Changelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft."  
 SPENSER'S *Faery Queene*, I. x. 65-68.

In the second Shepherd's Pageant of the Towneley Miracle Cycle, in reality a rude, realistic sketch of Northumbrian rustic life in the time of the early Edwards, there is an amusing allusion to this popular belief. One of the shepherds, Mak, has stolen a sheep from the others. Having killed it, for concealment he tucks it up in the cradle and tries, when the suspicious shepherds follow him home, to pass it off for a baby. They insist on looking at the child, whereupon Mak's wife, no less tricky than he, insists that the "hornyd lad" is a changeling.

"He was taken with an elfe;  
 I saw it myself.  
 When the clok stroke twelf  
 Was he forshapyn."

The fairies, who were obliged on every seventh year to yield up a tenth of their train to the devil, were supposed to steal human children for the purpose of making up this tribute.

"When I was a boy just turned of nine,  
My uncle sent for me,  
To hunt, and hawk, and ride with him,  
And keep him companie.

There came a wind out of the north,  
A sharp wind and a snell,  
And a dead sleep came over me,  
And frae my horse I fell.  
The Queen of Fairies she was there,  
And took me to hersell.

. . . . .

And never would I tire, Janet,  
In fairy-land to dwell,  
But aye, at every seven years,  
They pay the teind to hell;  
And I'm sae fat and fair of flesh,  
I fear 'twill be mysell!"

*Ballad of Tamlane.*

It would appear, however, that sometimes the fairies dealt more kindly with their mortal charges. We hear of —

"A virtuous well, about whose flow'ry banks  
The nimble-footed fairies dance their rounds,  
By the pale moonshine, dipping oftentimes  
Their stolen children, so to make them free  
From dying flesh and dull mortality."

*FLETCHER'S Faithful Shepherdess.*

The belief in changelings lived on to the days of the New England witchcraft. See Whittier's poem "The Changeling."

## 25. Knight of his train.

SILENUS.

"These are nights

Solemn to the shining rites  
Of the Fairy Prince, and knights;  
While the moon their orgies lights.

2 SATYR. Will they come abroad, anon?

3 SATYR. Shall we see young Oberon?

4 SATYR. Is he such a princely one,  
As you spake him long ago?

SILENUS. Satyrs, he doth fill with grace  
Every season, every place;  
Beauty dwells but in his face:  
He's the height of all our race."

JONSON'S *Masque of Oberon*.

**Trace.** Meaning what?

26. Scan the verse.

28-29. Note the alliteration.

30. **square.** Quarrel.

31. Picture the scene, — the wood, the starlight, the defiant postures of the two tiny sovereigns, and the wee, frightened faces of the elves peeping out from the covert of the acorn-cups.

"Fairly places, fairly things,  
Fairly woods where the wild bee wings,  
Tiny trees for tiny dames —  
These must all be fairy names.

Tiny woods below whose boughs  
Shady fairies weave a house;  
Tiny tree-tops, rose or thyme,  
Where the braver fairies climb!"

STEVENSON'S *Garden of Verses*.

34. **Robin Goodfellow.** What does the name indicate as to the feeling of the English rustics for Puck?

"Keightley was of opinion that Shakespeare was the first to confound Puck with the house-spirit or Robin Goodfellow, but it is evident that in popular belief the same mischief-loving qualities which belong to Puck were attributed to Robin Goodfellow long before the time of Shakespeare." — WRIGHT.

"Tales of Robin Goodfellow are mentioned, more than once, in Scot's 'Discoverie of Witchcraft,' first published in 1584. Nash, in his 'Terrors of the Night,' 1594, observes that 'the Robin Goodfellowes, elfes, fairies, hobgoblins of our latter age, did most of their merry pranks in the night: then ground they malt, and had hempen shirts for their labours, daunst in greene meadows, pinchd maids in their sleep that swept not their houses cleane, and led poor travellers out of their way notoriously.' In Tarlton's 'Newes out of Purgatorie,' published a few years previously, we are told that Robin Goodfellow was 'famoyed in every old wives chronicle for his mad merry pranks.'" — HALLIWELL.

"Ask not my master, Oberon, why still  
 He keeps among his train this freakish sprite :  
 For sooth to say, the elf intends no ill ;  
 He never changed a word with Goblin Spite,  
 Else Oberon had banished him outright.  
 Not his to flee at cockcrow ; he was born  
 Of blameless Mirth, and looks upon the morn.  
 'Goodfellow, and sweet Puck,' some folk do name him ;  
 I pray you of your kindness not to blame him."

HELEN GRAY CONE'S *Oberon and Puck*.

35. *villagree*. See textual notes.

36. *Skim milk*. Cf.:—

"I know no haunts I have but to the dairy,  
 To skim the milk-bowls like a liquorish fairy."

RANDOLPH'S *Amyntas*, 1638.

*quern*. A hand-mill for grinding corn.

"Yet now and then, the maids to please,  
 At midnight I card up their wooll ;  
 And while they sleepe, and take their ease,  
 With wheel to threads their flax I pull.

I grind at mill

Their malt up still ;

I dress their hemp, I spin their tow ;

If any wake,

And would me take,

I wend me laughing, ho, ho, ho !" — *The Pranks of Puck*.

"Your grandame's maids were wont to set a bowl of milk for him, for his pains in grinding malt and mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight." — SCOT'S *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584.

38. *barm*. Yeast.

"Now the froth or barm, that riseth from these ales or beers, have a property to keep the skin fair and clear in women's faces."

HOLLAND'S *Pliny*.

"And if that the bowle of curds and creame were not duly set out for Robin Good-fellow, the frier, and Sisse the dairymaid, why then either the pottage was burnt to next day in the pot, or the cheeses would not curdle, or the butter would not come, or the ale in the vat never would have good head." — HARSENET'S *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, 1603.

39. " Whene'er such wanderers I meete,  
 As from their night-sports they trudge home ;  
 With counterfeiting voice I greeke  
 And call them on, with me to roame  
 Thro' woods, thro' lakes,  
 Thro' bogs, thro' brakes,  
 Or else, unseene, with them I go,  
 All in the nicke,  
 To play some tricke,  
 And frolicke it, with ho, ho, ho ! "

*The Pranks of Puck.*

- [ 42. See textual notes.  
 46. See textual notes.  
 48. crab. Crab-apple.

" I love no rost but a nut-brown toste,  
 And a crab layde in the fyre."

*Gammer Gurton's Needle.*

50. dewlap. Meaning what ?

51. aunt. Aunt and uncle are neighborly titles for good-humored elders, apparently less in use in the Old England than the New ; yet the "bitter-sweet fool" calls Lear "nuncle."

52-53. " Elsewhere I have compared these tales with all that spiritualism has of scratch and rap and flying chair and errant table. It is all the same story. Our fathers told of Puck and brownie, our weak brethren tell of 'spirits,' but, whatever it is, it is always the same thing, a mocking, fugitive, impertinent 'agency,' whom no philosopher can 'arrest.' It is amusing to find how little Diabolus changes his ways. Increase Mather, in his 'Remarkable Providences in New England,' has many anecdotes of Puck's doings, only he does not call him Puck. From Saint Colette, about 1430, the 'agency' would often snatch her chair, upsetting the holy sister among the wondering nuns. 'This is how he often uses me,' said the saint, by 'he' meaning Diabolus — no one else ! But it was only Puck ; 'down topples she,'

'And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,'

whereas the nuns of Saint Colette took the matter seriously." — ANDREW LANG, *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, August, 1895.

54. tallor. The point of the jest has been lost, — or perhaps

Puck used the word simply to lead off the commentators on one of his darkling chases.

55. **quire.** A suggestion that the noisy company acts in concert.

56. **neeze.** Sneeze.

58. See textual notes.

**The King and Queen of Fairies.** "The idea of a fairy king and queen is derived from the classic realm of the dead, from Hades and Persephone, Pluto and Proserpine. Chaucer tells of 'Proserpine and all her fayrie' in 'The Merchant's Tale.' Campion sings very sweetly of 'the fairy queen Proserpina.' That queen whom Thomas the Rhymer loved dwelt in a shadowy land beyond the river of slain men's blood :—

'For a' the bluid that's shed in earth  
Flows through the streams of this countrie.'

"In the Scottish fairyland Alison Pearson met Maitland of Lethington, who had 'died a Roman death,' as men believed, by his own act. Thus mediæval fairies, in Scotland at least, were neighbors and feudatories of the dead, and thus spirits and fairies blend, the latter, as some deem, thus going back to their original. But there is none of this funereal color about Shakespeare's elfin court, and no touch of the tomb in Oberon and Titania." — ANDREW LANG.

### **The Fairy Train.**

"They come from beds of lichen green,  
They creep from mullens' velvet screen ;  
Some on the backs of beetles fly  
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,  
Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,  
And rock'd about in the evening breeze ;  
Some from the hum-bird's downy nest —  
They had driven him out by elfin power,  
And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,  
Had slumbered there till the charmed hour ;  
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,  
With glittering ising-stars inlaid ;  
And some had opened the four o'clock,  
And stole within its purple shade.  
And now they throng the moonlight glade,  
Above — below — on every side,  
Their little minim forms arrayed  
In the tricksy pomp of fairy pride !"

DRAKE'S *Culprit Fay*.

60. Note, for all its pique, the fairy grace of the greeting.

**Titania.** From Ben Jonson's day to the present Shakespeare's Latin scholarship has not been highly rated, but it would appear that he took this name from the original text of his Ovid, where it is used more than once to designate a goddess of Titan descent. Golding's translation does not keep the term. It may seem a trifle absurd to look upon her tiny Majesty as a daughter of the giant race, one may suspect that the mere music of the name, with its elfin trip of syllables, was what appealed to Shakespeare, but remembering that the Queen of Faery was actually confused with Proserpina, we submit to the learning of the commentators.

"It was the belief of those days that the Fairies were the same as the classic Nymphs, the attendants of Diana: 'That fourth kind of spiritus,' says King James, 'quhilk be the gentilis was called Diana, and her wandering court, and amongs us, called the **Phairie**.' The Fairy-queen was therefore the same as Diana, whom Ovid frequently styles Titania." — KEIGHTLEY.

"Diana, Latona, and Circe are each styled by Ovid 'Titania.' . . . Thus used [the name] embodies rich and complex associations connected with the silver bow, the magic cup, and the triple crown. . . . Diana, Latona, Hecate, are all goddesses of night, queens of the shadowy world, ruling over its mystic elements and spectral powers. The common name thus awakens recollections of gleaming huntresses in dim and dewy woods, of dark rites and potent incantations under moonlit skies, of strange aerial voyages, and ghostly apparitions of the under-world. It was, therefore, of all possible names, the one best fitted to designate the queen of the same shadowy empire, with its phantom troops and activities, in the Northern mythology. And since Shakespeare, with prescient inspiration, selected it for this purpose, it has naturally come to represent the whole world of fairy beauty, elfin adventure, and goblin sport connected with lunar influences, with enchanted herbs, and muttered spells." — BAYNES.

65. **Fairy-land.**—

"None that breatheth living aire does know  
Where is that happy land of Faëry."

69. "The kingdom of the fairy beings is placed in the aromatic flower-scented Indies, in the land where mortals live in a half dreamy state." — GERVINUS.

70. **bouncing Amazon.** Is Hippolyta belied ?

79-80. Scan the verses.

81. "One of the strokes of humour in this whole scene, between atomies who can creep into acorn-cups, and for whom the waxen thigh of a bee affords an ample torch, lies in the assumption by them of human powers and of superhuman importance. Not only is Titania jealous of the bouncing Amazon, but this their quarrel influences the moon in the sky, changes the seasons, and affects disastrously the whole human race." — FURNESS.

84-85. Scan the verses.

86. "The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,  
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move ;  
And on the tawny sands and shelves,  
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.  
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim  
The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,  
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep —  
What hath night to do with sleep?"

MILTON'S *Comus*.

92. **continents.** Meaning what here ?

94-95. Cf.: —

"And summer's green all girded up in sheaves  
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard."

*Sonnets*, XII. 7-8.

96. Scan the verse.

97. **murrain flock.** Dead of the cattle plague.

98. **nine-men's-morris.** A favorite game in Warwickshire during Shakespeare's boyhood, and still extant under the name of **Mill** or **Shepherd's Mill**. A group of Stratford boys, for instance, would go out from the town to an open field, where they would dig up the turf with their knives until they had shaped three rectangles, one within another, and connected these by certain lines. The players on one side would be furnished with stones, on the other with pieces of wood. The game was somewhat after the fashion of checkers, the ambition of either side being to move its "nine men" along the straight lines so skilfully as to pen the nine opposing *merelles*, as they were termed in France, in the innermost square,



known as "the pound." See for fuller description, with diagram, Halliwell's note on this passage, or Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes," IV. 2, § 13.

99. **Mazes.** "This alludes to a sport still followed by boys; that is, what is now called **running the figure of eight.**" — STEEVENS.

"Several mazes of the kind here alluded to are still preserved, having been kept up from time immemorial. On the top of Catherine Hill, Winchester, the usual play-place of the school, observes Percy, was a very perplexed and winding path running in a very small space over a great deal of ground, called a Miz-Maze. The senior boys obliged the juniors to tread it, to prevent the figure from being lost." — HALLIWELL.

See, for interesting diagram, Halliwell's note on this passage.

101. See textual notes.

103. **Therefore.** Referring to what? Cf. lines 88 and 93.

105. Scan the verse.

**Rheumatic.** Signifying rather catarrhal.

107-111. Wherein is the passage poetical?

112. **chllding.** Fruitful.

113. Scan the verse.

114. **increase.** Produce.

116. Scan the verse.

117. For this unpleasant weather, on which the royal mites so pride themselves, see introduction.

119. "The only pain which agitates these beings is jealousy, the desire of possessing the beautiful sooner than others; they shun the distorting quarrel; their steadfast aim and longing is for undisturbed enjoyment." — GERVINUS.

121. **Set your heart at rest.** How uttered?

122. And yet, judging from the report of an old-time singer who had spied on the fairy king and queen in a happier hour, fairy-land was of precious worth: —

"I spied Kinge Oberon and his beuteous Queene,  
 Attended by a nimble footed trayne  
 Of fayeryes trippinge ore the medows greene,  
 And to meewards (methought) they came amayne.  
 I coucht myselfe behinde a bushe to spye,  
 What would betide the noble company.

It gann to rayne, the Kinge and Queene they runne,  
 Under a mushroom fretted over head,  
 With glowwormes artificially donne,  
 Resemblinge much the canopy of a bedd,  
 Of cloth of silver, and such glimmeringe light  
 It gave, as stars doe in a frosty night.

The Kinge perceivinge it grew night apace,  
 And that faint light was but for show alone,  
 Out of a box made of a fayre topace,  
 Hee toke a blasinge carbuncle that showne  
 Like to a flamelinge barre of iron, and  
 Stucke it among the glowwormes with his hand.

The floor whereon they trode, it was of jett  
 And mother of pearle, polished and cutt,  
 Chequerd, and in most decent order sett,  
 A table dyamond was theire table, butt  
 To see th' reflection from the rooffe to the table,  
 'Twas choyce meethought and showed admirable."

Printed in HALLIWELL'S *Introduction*.

123-134. Is there any characteristic of fairy nature, rather than human nature, in the way the little queen speaks of her lost friend? Scan verses 123, 127, and 131. What color, fragrance, and movement may be found in the passage? What repetitions?

135. Is his angry inch of majesty at all moved by Titania's explanation?

137. "Round about, round about, in a fine ring-a;  
 Thus we dance, thus we dance, and thus we sing-a;  
 Trip and go, to and fro, over this green-a,  
 All about, in and out, for our brave queen-a."

*Maydes Metamorphosis*, 1600.

"I'll charm the air to give a sound,  
 While you perform your antic round."

*Macbeth*, IV. 1. 130-131.

141. Fairies, away!

"This way, this way come, and hear,  
 You that hold these pleasures dear;  
 Fill your ears with our sweet sound,  
 Whilst we melt the frozen ground.

This way come ; make haste, oh, fair !  
 Let your clear eyes gild the air ;  
 Come, and bless us with your sight ;  
 This way, this way, seek delight !" — FLETCHER.

144. What are the fairy meanings of **torment** and **injury** ?

145. What is Puck's expression as he comes hither ?

145-151. Examine the musical variety of verse-structure, note the alliterations, the personifications, and the choice words of the passage. See, for mermaids, the German lyric of "Die Lorelei ;" for their classic equivalent, sirens, William Morris's "Life and Death of Jason ;" and for the possible reminiscence of the Kenilworth pageants, 1575, Scott's "Kenilworth." For graver authorities, see Smith (Classical Dictionary), Baring-Gould, and Laneham (fully quoted in Halliwell's notes). The discussion inaugurated by Warburton, as to whether by the mermaid is figured poor Mary Stuart, is thoroughly reviewed in the Furness "Variorum," pp. 75-82.

152. **thou couldst not.** Why not ?

154. **Cupid all arm'd.**

"He doth bear a golden bow,  
 And a quiver hanging low,  
 Full of arrows, that out-brave  
 Dian's shafts, where if he have  
 Any head more sharp than other,  
 With that first he strikes his mother." — JONSON.

155. Scan the verse. Shakespeare's one splendid compliment to Queen Elizabeth has outshone all the gilded hyperboles of his fellow-poets save Spenser's title to an immortal epic, "The Faery Queene."

156-161. What constitutes the chief beauty of the passage ? Note the change in movement, the epithets, the alliterations. Scan verse 160.

163. **a little western flower.** For a discussion of Halpin's hypothesis (in his essay "Oberon's Vision," etc., printed by the Shakespeare Society, 1843), see the Furness "Variorum," pp. 83-91.

Halpin would put into little King Oberon's mouth a riddling reference to the Earl of Leicester's intrigues a score of years past. This glorious fairy-vision is, however, amply accounted for if it is regarded as an impressive introduction to the magic flower which is to work the confusions of the play.

165. **love-in-idleness.** English maidens also call it heartsease, pansy, cuddle-me-to-you, jump-up-and-kiss-me, kiss-me-at-the-garden-gate, and tickle-my-fancy. American maidens call it Johnny-jump-up. And what else ?

171. Note the alliteration. "The margins of the Bibles in Shakespeare's day explained leviathan as a whale, and so no doubt he thought it." — WRIGHT.

172. Probably an expression in general use, "derived," says Halliwell, "from the old plans of the world, in which the Zodiac is represented as 'a girdle round about the Earth.'"

173. Note Puck's accuracy and see him run.

173-182. What of the poetic value of this passage ?

183. **I am invisible.** "Among the 'properties' enumerated in Henslowe's 'Diary' is 'a robe for to go invisible.' Possibly Oberon wore, or put on, such a robe, by which it was understood that he was not to be seen." — COLLIER.

Cf. : —

"No blood nor bones in him should be,  
In shape and being such,  
That men should heare him speake, but not  
His wandering shadow touch."

*Ballad of Tom Thumb.*

188-189. What is the quibble ?

192. **adamant.** "There is now a dayes a kind of adamant which draweth unto it fleshe, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouthes of contrary persons, and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offending any part of him." — FENTON's *Wonders of Nature*, 1569.

201. "Love is a sickness full of woes,  
All remedies refusing ;  
A plant that with most cutting grows,  
Most barren with best using." — DANIEL.

207. Scan the verse.

232. Which has been shown the mere adroit in dialogue ? Which ought to be shame-faced ?

242-243. Oberon's touch of sympathy here (or is it mere fairy freakishness ?) would almost justify, for the moment, Helen Gray Cone's conception of —

"Oberon, Elferon,  
Pleasant Prince of Faery !

Blood of Pan is in his veins,  
And oft he goes in great Pan's guise ;  
But not of Pan is all his mood,  
Godlike-careless, dreamy-wise ;  
Conscious he of mortal pains !  
He hath shadows in his eyes  
Such as under hemlocks brood ;  
In his voice he hath a tone  
Like unto the dark pine's moan ;  
Northland bore him, not the South !  
Yet rare laughs hath his mouth,  
Birch-leaf laughs, rippling light."

244-245. Note the two instances of fairy courtesy.

246-264. What constitutes the beauty of the passage ? Examine it for color, fragrance, motion, picture, and fairy suggestion. Note the music of certain verses and the alliterations. What are the finest epithets ? Make vivid to thought the various flowers and the fairy scene.

dances and delight :—

"Shake off your heavy trance !  
And leap into a dance  
Such as no mortals use to tread :  
Fit only for Apollo  
To play to, for the moon to lead,  
And all the stars to follow !" — BEAUMONT.

enamell'd skin. Such were the tapestries of Oberon's chamber,—

"where within  
The roome is hung with the blue skin  
Of shifted Snake : enfrez'd throughout  
With eyes of Peacocks' Trains."

HERRICK's *Oberon's Palace*.

streak. "Stroke, touch gently." — WRIGHT.

## SCENE II.

"Heere is the queene of Fairye,  
With harpe, and pipe, and symphonie,  
Dwellynge in this place."—CHAUCER'S *Sir Thopas*.

1. **roundel.** Meaning what? Cf. :—

"To shew your pomp, you'd have your daughters and maids  
Dance o'er the fields like faies to church, this frost.  
I'll have no rondels, I, in the queen's paths."

JONSON'S *Tale of a Tub*.

"In alrie rankes

Tread Roundelayes upon the silver sands."

BROWNE'S *Pastorals*.

2. **Fairy measures of time as well as space.** See textual notes.  
3. **cankers.** Canker-worms. Cf. :—

"As killing as the canker to the rose."

MILTON'S *Lycidas*.

"No more be griev'd at that which thou hast done:  
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud;  
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,  
And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud."

*Sonnets, XXXV. 1-4.*

4. **rere-mice.** "Bats; A. S. *hrére-mús*, from *hreran* to stir, agitate, and so equivalent to the old name 'flittermouse.'"—WRIGHT.

"Once a bat and ever a bat, — a rere-mouse,  
And bird of twilight."—JONSON'S *New Inn*.

7. **quaint.** Meaning what?

8. **Fairy discipline has sadly fallen away since the days of Shakespeare.** Cf.

"FIRST FAIRY. 'Tit, my queen, must it be so?  
Wherefore, wherefore, should we go?'"

TITANIA. 'I, Titania, bid you flit,  
And you dare to call me Tit.'

FIRST FAIRY. 'Tit, for love and brevity,  
Not for love of levity.'

TITANIA. 'Pertest of our flickering mob,  
Wouldst thou call my Oberon Ob?'

FIRST FAIRY. 'Nay, an please your Elfin Grace,  
Never Ob before his face.'

TITANIA. 'Fairy realm is breaking down  
When the fairy slights the crown.'

TENNYSON'S *The Foresters*.

9-24. What constitutes the charm of the song? Why is the name Philomel better here than nightingale? What "spell" threatens the Fairy Queen, even while her tiny subjects sing? What are the objects of fairy aversion, and why? What are the most graphic epithets? The latest envoy from fairyland suggests a special reason for the elfin dread of spiders: —

"A spider sewed at night  
Without a light;  
Upon an arc of white.  
If ruff it was of dame  
Or shroud of gnome,  
Himself, himself inform." — EMILY DICKINSON.

27-34. Picture in mind the fairy scene, not forgetting the sentinel aloof. What are ounce and pard?

35-65. Notice the grace of the opening quatrain. What alliterations? What expression of peculiar beauty in this first stanza? How does this scene between the lovers compare for poetic charm with that in Act I.? What courtesies are interchanged? What is the meaning of line 46?

66-83. What is the musical effect when a fairy takes up the strain? Is Puck naturally a blunderer? What words of his now bring the scene vividly to mind? What would be the form and color of Athenian garments? Where has the word *weed*, in the sense of clothing, been used in this act before? What is the modern survival? Scan verse 73. See textual notes for verse 77. Paraphrase verses 80-81.

88. Fond chase —

"Art thou gone in haste?  
I'll not forsake thee;  
Runnest thou ne'er so fast,  
I'll overtake thee:  
Over the dales, over the downs,  
Through the green meadows,  
From the fields through the towns  
To the dim shadows.

All along the plain,  
 To the low fountains,  
 Up and down again  
 From the high mountains;  
 Echo then shall again  
 Tell her I follow,  
 And the floods to the woods  
 Carry my hullo, hullo."—WEBSTER.

91. Scan the verse.

97. To what does the phrase, **as a monster**, refer ?

99. **Sphery**. Meaning what ?

104. See textual notes.

108-110. What of the poetic values here ? Is there any touch of high poetry in the remainder of the scene ?

115. Note the fairy irony of the situation.

119. Meaning what ?

123. Is Helena perhaps aware of having fairly exposed herself to mockery ?

129. Is Helena sobbing here, or is this resort to repetition a trait of character ? What instances of such repetition earlier in the scene ? What moods or what characteristics are so hinted ?

142. "Sweet love, I see, changing his property,  
 Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate."

*Richard II.*, III. ii. 135-136.

145-156. How is *Hermia's* dream appropriate and her action characteristic ?

### ACT III.—SCENE I.

"Turn we now to the second group. . . . These are types of a class ever ready to our hand. Bottom sat at a Stratford loom, Starveling on a Stratford tailoring-board; between them they perhaps made the doublet which captivated the eyes of Richard Hathaway's daughter, or the hose that were torn in the park of the Lucys."—*Edinburgh Review*, April, 1848.

7. **bully**. "A term of familiarity addressed by his companions to a jolly blustering fellow."—WRIGHT.

What modern survival ?

8-11. Bottom is now posing in the *rôle* of literary critic. Not even Quince can answer him; the courage of the other actors gives



way at once, and then he brings forward his fine device of a prologue. Why does Bottom insist upon the prologue ?

12. **By'r lakin.** See textual notes.

**parlous.** See grammatical notes.

13. **Starveling.** "Starveling, the tailor, keeps the peace, and objects to the lion and the drawn sword. Starveling does not start the objections himself, but seconds them when made by others, as if he had not spirit to express his fears without encouragement." — HAZLITT.

23-24. What does Bottom know or care about metre? Does Quince act upon either of Bottom's suggestions as to the prologue ?

26. **I fear it.** Where is the emphasis ?

32-33. Snout, having followed Bottom's lead, and started a difficulty, attempts to meet it by Bottom's own device; but in both instances Bottom's ready volubility bears the slow-spoken tinker down.

44-45. Are the difficulties proposed by Quince any less absurd than the others ?

61. **Snug.** Look up this character carefully to see if justification can be found for either of the following opinions:—

"Snug, the joiner, who can board and lodge only one idea at a time, and that tardily." — COWDEN-CLARKE.

"Snug, the joiner, is the moral man of the piece, who proceeds by measurement and discretion in all things." — HAZLITT.

From this single speech, what characteristics of Snug may be gathered ?

69. Is there any evidence of excitement on the part of Quince when he sees his play actually in rehearsal ?

78. See textual notes.

89-90. What are we to infer as to the complexion of Pyramus ?

91. **Juvenal.** This word seems to have been an affectation of the day. Could the pun be worse ?

99. See textual notes.

"Sometimes I meete them like a man ;  
 Sometimes an ox ; sometimes a hound ;  
 And to a horse I turn me can ;  
 To trip and trot about them round.  
 But if, to ride, my back they stride,  
 More swift than wind away I go,  
 O'er hedge and lands,  
 Thro' pools and ponds,  
 I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho !" — *The Pranks of Puck.*

107. "Note the pelting, rattling staccato, which sounds like the explosion of a pack of Chinese firecrackers at the heels of the flying clowns." — FURNESS.

112-113. "Bottom indulges in what appears to have been a piece of familiar banter of the time, without knowing how much it affected himself. Compare Mrs. Quickly's speech in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' I. iv. 134: 'You shall have an fool's head of your own.'" — WRIGHT.

121. **ousel-cock.** Blackbird.

123. **throstle.** Thrush.

124. **quill.** Pipe or note.

125. "Perhaps a parody on a line in the Spanish Tragedy, often ridiculed by the poets of our author's time: 'What outcry calls me from my naked bed?'" — HALLIWELL.

127. **plain-song.** Meaning what? Cf. :—

"Meanetime Dan Cuckow, knowing that his voice  
Had no variety, no change, no choice :  
But through the wesand pipe of his harsh throat,  
Cri'd only Cuckow, that prodigious note!"

NICCOLS'S *The Cuckow*, 1607.

135. Scan the verse.

138. "Bottom, during the time that he attracts the attentions of Titania, never for a moment thinks there is anything extraordinary in the matter. He takes the love of the Queen of the Fairies as a thing of course, orders about her tiny attendants as if they were so many apprentices at his loom, and dwells in Fairy Land, unobservant of its wonders, as quietly as if he were still in his workshop. Great is the courage and self-possession of an ass-head." — MAGINN.

142. **Gleek.** Jest.

147-157. Why is it that this passage falls with so dulcet an effect upon the ear? Which are the verses of peculiar beauty? Scan verse 154.

158. **Peaseblossom.**

"Whose woven wings the summer dyes  
Of many colours."

159. **COBWEB.** "His hat made of an oaken leafe,  
His shirt a spider's web  
Both light and soft for those his limbs  
That were so smally bred.

His hose and doublet thistledown,  
 Togeather weav'd full fine;  
 His stockins of an apple greene,  
 Made of the outward rine."

160. **MOTH.** "A rich mantle he did wear  
 Made of tinsel gossamere,  
 Be-starred over with a few  
 Dyamond drops of morning dew."

161. **MUSTARD-SEED.** "His feet are shod with gauze,  
 His helmet is of gold."

163-173. What peculiarity of rhyming imparts such clinging sweetness to this passage? What are the finest touches of fairy fancy? What colors are named or suggested? Visualize the picture. For fairy viands compare:—

"The dancing fairies when they left to play  
 Then backe did pull them, and in holes of trees  
 Stole the sweet honey from the painful bees,  
 Which in the flowre to put they oft were seene  
 And for a banquet brought it to their queene."

BROWNE'S *Pastorals*.

"A little mushroome-table spred,  
 After short prayers, they set on bread;  
 A Moon-parcht grain of purest wheat,  
 With some small glit'ring gritt, to eate  
 His choyce bitts with; then in a trice  
 They make a feast lesse great then nice.  
 But all this while his eye is serv'd,  
 We must not thinke his eare was sterv'd:  
 But that there was in place to stir  
 His Spleen, the chirring Grasshopper;  
 The merry Cricket, puling Flie,  
 The piping Gnat for minstralcy,  
 And now, we must imagine first,  
 The Elves present to quench his thirst  
 A pure seed-Pearle of Infant dew,  
 Brought and besweetned in a blew  
 And pregnant violet; which done,  
 His kithing eyes begin to runne  
 Quite through the table, where he spies  
 The hornes of paperie Butterflies:  
 Of which he eates, . . .

[and] Mandrakes eares;

Moles eyes; to these, the slain Stag's teared:  
 The unctuous dewlaps of a Snail,  
 The broke heart of a Nightingale  
 Ore-come in musicke."

HERRICK'S *Oberon's Feast*.

178-196. "He sits down among the fairies as one of themselves without any astonishment; but so far from assuming, like Abou Hassan, the manners of the court where he has been so strangely intruded, he brings the language and bearing of the booth into the glittering circle of Queen Titania."—MAGINN.

Which one of the elfin courtiers is very much afraid of Bottom and why? What is the force of Bottom's compliment to Cobweb? Of his "gleek upon occasion" of meeting Mustard-seed? Is Bottom, outside of fairyland, capable of such a pretty bit of irony?

198. "Alluding to the supposed origin of dew in the moon."—WALKER.

200. But is Titania perhaps wrong as to the reason why the little flowers weep? Cf. IV. i.

## SCENE II.

2. **in her eye.** Meaning what? Compare, in the preceding scene, line 164.

3. **in extremity.** Meaning what?

5. **night-rule.** Perhaps a corruption of **night-revel**. Perhaps meaning simply such fashion of behavior as prevails at night.

6. Picture the glee of the "mad spirit" in giving his report. What is the expression of the listening Fairy-King?

7. **close.** Meaning what? Note the alliteration.

8. **dull.** Meaning what? Cf.:—

"Unless some dull and favourable hand will whisper music."—*2 Henry IV.*, IV. v. 2.

9. **patches.** "This use of **patch** is said to have grown from the motley or **patch-work** dress worn by the 'allowed Fool.' At all events, it came to be used generally as a term of contempt for a simpleton or a clown."—HUDSON.

What modern survival?

13. **barren sort.** Witless crew.

16. What advantage?

17. **nole.** "A grotesque word for head, like pate, noddle. The

A. S. knoll, knoll, the top of anything, is the same word."—WRIGHT.

Scan the verse.

18. Scan the verse.

19. *mimic*. Actor. Perhaps a harlequin. Cf. :—

"Draw what troop you can from the stage after you ; the mimicks are beholden to you for allowing them elbow room."—DECKER'S *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609.

"Morris-dancers thou shalt see,  
Marian too in Pagentrie :  
And a mimick to devise  
Many grinning properties."

HERRICK'S *The Wake*.

21. *russet-pated choughs*. Gray-headed jackdaws.

25. *our stamp*. "At hearing the footsteps of the fairies, which were powerful enough to rock the ground. See IV. i. 85."—WRIGHT.

"The stamp of a fairy might be efficacious though not loud."—STEEVENS.

"In-deede your grandams maides were woont to set a boll of milke before him and his cousine Robin Goodfellow, for grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight ; and you have also heard that he would chafe exceedingly, if the maid or good-wife of the house, having compassion of his nakedness, laid aine clothes for him, besides his messe of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee ; for in that case he saith : What have we here ? Hemton hamten, here will I nevermore tread nor stampen."—SCOT'S *Discoveries of Witchcraft*, 1584.

26. See grammatical notes.

30. *yelders*. Meaning what ? Cf. :—

"I was not born a yelder."

1 *Henry IV.*, V. iii. 11.

34. What are the finer verses and phrases in Puck's speech concluded here ? What the weaker ? How far is the narrative Athenian ? How far English ?

36. *latch'd*. Anointed. (For summary of etymological discussion see the Furness "*Variorum*," pp. 136-137.)

41. *close*. Meaning what ? Cf. line 7 above.

48. See textual notes.

53. whole. Solid. Cf.:—

“I had else been perfect,  
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock.”

*Macbeth*, III. iv. 22-23.

55. Paraphrase.

57. See textual notes.

59. It serves the troth-breaker right. Helena and Demetrius might both profit from the old song:—

“ÆNONE. Fair and fair, and twice so fair,  
As fair as any may be;  
The fairest shepherd on our green,  
A love for any lady.

PARIS. Fair and fair, and twice so fair,  
As fair as any may be;  
Thy love is fair for thee alone,  
And for no other lady.

ÆNONE. My love is fair, my love is gay,  
As fresh as bin the flowers in May,  
And of my love my roundelay,  
My merry, merry, merry roundelay,  
Concludes with Cupid's curse,—  
They that do change old love for new,  
Pray gods they change for worse.”

Peele in *The Arraignment of Paris*.

68. Why the repetition?

73. “She was a vixen when she went to school.”

74. mispris'd mood. Meaning what? Cf. misprision in line 90 below.

81. Scan the verse. — ABBOTT, § 466.

84-87. “Marshall thinks that the ‘prosaic and legal character’ of these words ‘smells’ of an attorney’s office. The fondness of Shakespeare for similes drawn from bankruptcy, even in the most impassioned passages, may be learned from Mrs. Cowden-Clarke’s and Mrs. Furness’s ‘Concordances.’” — FURNESS.

92-93. “Puck’s excuse for his carelessness does not seem to be very logical.” — DEIGHTON.

94. Note the alliteration and the suggestion of speed.

96. fancy-sick. Meaning what?

**pale of cheer.** Meaning what ?

97. So Shakespeare tells of "blood-consuming sighs," "blood-sucking sighs," "mortifying groans," and "dry sorrow" that "drinks our blood." "All alluding to the ancient supposition that every sigh was indulged at the expense of a drop of blood." — STEEVENS.

100-101. What is the suggestion of movement here ? Why "the Tartar's bow" ?

103. **Cupid's archery.**

' Oh, turn thy bow !  
Thy power we feel and know ;  
Fair Cupid, turn away thy bow !  
They be those golden arrows,  
Bring ladies all their sorrows ;  
And till there be more truth in men,  
Never shoot at maid again ! " — FLETCHER.,

110. **Captain of our fairy band.**

" His belt was made of mirtle leaves,  
Plaited in small curious threaves,  
Beset with amber cowslip studs,  
And fring'd about with daisy buds ;  
In which his bugle horne was hung,  
Made of the babbling eccho's tongue ;  
Which set unto his moon-burn'd lip,  
He windes, and then his faeries skip :  
At that, the lazy dawn 'gan sound,  
And each did trip a faery round."

Quoted by Halliwell from the *Musarum Delicis*.

113. **a lover's fee.**

" Three kisses were properly a lover's fee. 'How many' saies Batt ;  
why, three, saies Matt, for that's a mayden's fee.' " — HALLIWELL.

114. **fond pageant.** Meaning what ?

115. "The poet further depicts his fairies as beings of no high intellectual development. Whoever attentively reads their parts will find that nowhere is reflection imparted to them. Only in one exception does Puck make a sententious remark upon the infidelity of man." — GERVINUS. Cf. 92-93.

116-121. Which has the wilder love of mischief, Oberon or Puck ?  
**sport alone.** See grammatical notes.

122. Why, indeed ?

124-125. See grammatical notes.

140.      "Love for such a cherry lip  
               Would be glad to pawn his arrows ;  
               Venus here to take a sip  
               Would sell her doves and teams of sparrows.  
               But they shall not so ;  
               Hey nonny, nonny no !  
               None but I this lip must owe,  
               Hey nonny, nonny no !" — MIDDLETON.

141. Scan the verse.

**Taurus.** A mountain-range in Asia Minor.

142-143. What is the figure of speech ?

144. Compare : —

"I take thy hand, this hand,  
 As soft as dove's down and as white as it,  
 Or Ethiopian's tooth, or the fann'd snow that's bolted  
 By the northern blasts twice o'er."

*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 375-378.

145-161. What changes are there in Helena's tone ?

**extort.** Meaning what ?

169. See grammatical notes.

171. See grammatical notes.

172.      "O, never say that I was false of heart,  
               Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.  
               As easy might I from myself depart  
               As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie :  
               That is my home of love ; if I have rang'd,  
               Like him that travels I return again."

*Sonnets*, CIX. 1-6.

188. What is Lysander's gesture ?

197. **bait.** Set upon from all sides, as at a bear-baiting the dogs worry the bear.

200. **hasty-footed time.** Cf. : —

"Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleets,  
 And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,  
 To the wide world and all her fading sweets."

*Sonnets*, XIX. 5-7.

201. For the scansion see textual notes.

203. **two artificial gods.** "Two gods exercising their creative skill in art ; in this case the art of embroidery." — WRIGHT.



204. Scan the verse.

208. So we grew together. Compare :—

EMILIA.

"I was acquainted

Once with a time when I enjoy'd a playfellow ;  
You were at wars when she the grave enrich'd,  
Who made too proud the bed, took leave o' the moon—  
Which then look'd pale at parting—when our count  
Was each eleven.

HIPPOLYTA. 'Twas Flavinia.

EMILIA.

Yes.

You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love :  
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely season'd,  
More buckled with strong judgment, and their needs  
The one of th' other may be said to water  
Their intertangled roots of love ; but I  
And she I sighed and spoke of were things innocent,  
Lov'd for we did, and, like the elements  
That know not what nor why, yet do effect  
Rare issues by their operance, our souls  
Did so to one another. What she lik'd,  
Was then of me approv'd ; what not, condemn'd,  
No more arraignment. The flower that I would pluck  
And put within my bosom, she would long  
Till she had such another, and commit it  
To the like innocent cradle, where phoenix-like  
They died in perfume. On my head no toy  
But was her pattern ; her affections—pretty,  
Though happily her careless wear—I follow'd  
For my most serious decking. Had mine ear  
Stol'n some new air, or at adventure humm'd one  
From musical coinage, why, it was a note  
Whereon her spirits would sojourn—rather dwell on—  
And sing it in her slumbers."

*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, I. iii. 49-78.

213-214. See textual notes.

219. How does the speech concluded here compare in poetic values with Helena's other utterances ? What are the figures of speech ? At what points does the metre betray emotion ? Wherein is the picture of childish friendship charming ? How does it compare, in grace and force of expression, with the similar passage quoted from "The Two Noble Kinsmen" ? And how does all this tender remem-

brance and indignant remonstrance accord with Helena's late intention of betraying Hermia to the "sharp Athenian law" ?

220. Scan the verse. What change of tone is perceptible in this fresh outbreak of Helena's ?

237. Scan the verse.

240. Scan the verse.

241. What alteration here in Helena's manner ?

242. **argument.** Subject for jest.

243. What significant touch is here ?

244. "Weep eyes, break heart !

My love and I must part.

Cruel fates true love do soonest sever ;

O, I shall see thee never, never, never !

O, happy is the maid whose life takes end

Ere it knows parent's frown or loss of friend !

Weep eyes, break heart !

My love and I must part." — MIDDLETON.

257. Of what complexion is Hermia ? What other evidence as to this is soon furnished by Lysander ?

257-258. See textual notes.

264. Scan the verse. See textual notes.

267-268. What is the sneer ?

272. Where does the emphasis fall ?

279. For the scansion see textual notes.

282. **juggler.** "Malone, Walker, Abbott, § 477, all pronounce this word **juggeler**, — a needless deformity, when an exclamation-mark can take the place of a syllable." — FURNESS.

283-284. "You stole my love ; fy upon you, fy !

You stole my love, fy, fy a ;

Guessed you but what a pain it is to prove,

You for your love would die a ;

And henceforth never longer

Be such a crafty wronger ;

But when deceit takes such a fall,

Then farewell sly device and all.

You stole my love ; fy upon you, fy !

You stole my love, fy, fy a." — MUNDAY.

288. What is the taunt ?

292. Scan the verse.

296. **painted.** Is Hermia expressing her spite against the red

and white of Helena's fair complexion, or is her taunt to be taken literally ?

**maypole.** See frontispiece to volume V. of Halliwell's edition of Shakespeare. "The plate represents a Maypole of very great height still existing in the village of Welford, Gloucestershire, about five miles from Stratford-on-Avon. It stands in the centre of the village, where three roads meet, and is fixed in a raised circular mound of earth to which there is an ascent by three stone steps. The mound is planted round with a low bush. The pole is painted in continuous vertical [?] stripes of white, red, and blue. It was anciently the custom thus to paint the pole." — FAIRHOLT.

300. **curst.** Meaning what ? Cf. the following line.

302. **right.** Meaning what ?

305. Is this quarrel in any way inconsistent with our previous impressions of Helena and Hermia ?

306-317. What characteristics of Helena appear here ?

321. Scan the verse.

324. **vixen.** "Properly a she-fox ; hence applied to an ill-tempered, spiteful woman. The form of the word is especially interesting as being the only instance in which the feminine termination -en — has been preserved." — WRIGHT.

327. Whom does Hermia address ?

328-330. What is Lysander's action ? What is his chivalry ?

**minimus.** "The word came into use probably from the musical term *minim*, which, in the very old notation, was the shortest note, though now one of the longest." — NARES.

**hinderling knot-grass.** "It appears that 'knot-grass' was anciently supposed to prevent the growth of any animal or child." — STEEVENS.

"We want a boy extremely for this function,  
Kept under for a year with milk and knot-grass."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER'S *The Coxcomb*, II. II.

**You bead, you acorn.** It should be remembered that Elizabethan beads were usually black and that acorns are brown.

335. Had Hermia been holding Lysander, at last accounts, or Lysander Hermia ?

338. **cheek by jole.** Meaning what ?

339. **coll.** Meaning what ?

**long of you.** Meaning what?

340. What is the action here?

342-343. What of the tragic dignity and poetic beauty of this couplet?

346. Is the King of Fairyland guilty of tautology?

347. **King of shadows.**

"Are they shadows that we see?  
And can shadows pleasure give?  
Pleasures only shadows be,  
Cast by bodies we conceive,  
And are made the things we deem  
In those figures which they seem." — DANIEL.

356. **starry welkin.** Meaning what?

357. What constitutes the excellence of the line? Has there been a change in poetic effect since Oberon and Puck began to speak? Should we expect the fairies to use the hexameter?

364. **death-counterfeiting sleep.** Cf. :—

"O, sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her."

*Cymbeline*, II. ii.

365. **leadens legs.** Cf. for a more poetic use of the epithet :—

"O murderous slumber,  
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy?"

*Julius Cæsar*, IV. iii. 268-269.

370-371. Scan these verses.

373. **date.** Meaning what? Cf. :—

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date."

*Sonnets*, XVIII. 1-4.

375. What commendable characteristic does the "fairy lord" display here?

376. Scan the verse.

379. **Night's swift dragons.** Cf. :—

"'Less Phillomel will deign a song,  
In her sweetest, saddest plight,  
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,  
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,  
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak."

MILTON'S *Il Penseroso*.

380. *Aurora's harbinger.* Cf. :—

"Now the bright morning-star, day's harbinger,  
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her  
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws  
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.

Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire  
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire ;  
Woods and groves are of thy dressing ;  
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing !  
Thus we salute thee with our early song,  
And welcome thee, and wish thee long."

MILTON'S *Song on May Morning.*

## 381-382. Scan verse 382. Cf. :—

"I have heard,  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
Awake the god of day ; and at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine."—*Hamlet*, I. i. 149-155.

"Up then crew the red red cock,  
And up and crew the gray ;  
The eldest to the youngest said,  
'Tis time we were away.

'The cock doth crow, the day doth daw,  
The channerin' worm doth chide ;  
Gin we be miss'd out o' our place,  
A sair pain we maun bide.'"

Ballad of *The Wife of Usher's Well.*

383. It was the ignorant and cruel custom to bury the bodies of suicides in the crossways, where many passers-by might trample over them.

386. Scan the verse. Is the tone of this line and the following more appropriate to Puck or to Oberon ? Is it appropriate to the fairies at all ?

387. *black-brow'd night.* Cf. :—

"Why, here walk I in the black brow of night,  
To find you out."—*King John*, V. vi. 17-18.

389. "Oberon merely means to say metaphorically that he has sported with Aurora, the morning's love, the first blush of morning ;

and that he is not, like a ghost, compelled to vanish at the dawn of day." — HALLIWELL.

391. "Right against the eastern gate,  
Where the great sun begins his state,  
Robed in flames and amber light,  
The clouds in thousand liveries dight."

MILTON'S *L'Allegro*.

392-393. Scan verse 392. The Cowden-Clarkes note, "how gorgeously" Shakespeare "floods" these lines "with blended rosy, golden, and sea-green hues."

402. **drawn.** Meaning what?

412. **try no manhood.** Meaning what?

419. **gray light.** Cf.:—

"But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill."

*Hamlet*, I. i. 166-167.

421. Puck's characteristic burst of mocking laughter, "Ho, ho, ho!" betrays his origin. The shaggy Devil of the Miracle Plays was known by that very ejaculation. (See note upon "Puck," Act II. Scene I. beginning.) But how is this shout of goblin glee to be explained here, — as a dramatic aside, or a momentary self-forgetfulness, or an outcry intended at once to give vent to Puck's merriment and to goad Demetrius to more frantic rage as a supposed mockery from Lysander?

422. **Abide me.** Meaning what?

432. See grammatical notes.

- 435-436. "Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving

Lock me in delight awhile;  
Let some pleasing dreams beguile  
All my fancies; that from thence  
I may feel an influence  
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,  
Let me know some little joy!  
We that suffer long annoy  
Are contented with a thought,  
Through an idle fancy wrought:  
Oh, let my joys have some abiding!"

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

438. We are ready now to consider how far E. W. Latimer's discrimination of their characters is true : "The tall, fair, spiteful, cowardly, exasperated Helena ; the *petite*, sprightly, dark, confiding, outraged Hermia — brave, but with a will and temper of her own ; Lysander, the true gentleman [!] and lover ; Demetrius, who was no gentleman, but at once hot-tempered and a sneak."

439. *curst*. Is the meaning here the same as in line 300 below ?

440. "O yes, O yes ! if any maid  
Whom leering Cupid has betrayed  
To frowns of spite, to eyes of scorn,  
And would in madness now see torn  
The boy in pieces, let her come  
Hither, and lay on him her doom." — LYL.

442-443. Note the alliterations.

446. "Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,  
Sorrow calls no time that's gone ;  
Violets plucked the sweetest rain  
Makes not fresh nor grow again ;  
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully ;  
Fate's hid ends eyes cannot see :  
Joys as winged dreams fly fast,  
Why should sadness longer last ?  
Grief is but a wound to woe ;  
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no mo."

FLETCHER.

448-451. "A section of two accents is rarely met with as an independent verse. The cause was evidently its shortness. Shakespeare, however, has adopted it into that peculiar rhythm in which are expressed the wants and wishes of his *fairy-land*. Under Shakespeare's sanction it has become classical, and must now be considered as the *fairy-dialect* of English literature." — GUEST.

461. Compare : —

"Our wooing doth not end like an old play ;  
Jack hath not Jill." — *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. ii. 805-806.

463. Compare : —

"FREDERIC. How now ? How goes it ?

JOHN. Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well, Frederic."

FLETCHER'S *The Chances*, III. iv.

## ACT IV.—SCENE I.

"This act opens with the court of Titania, who is enamoured of her Bottom. Oberon is watching them, invisible. Observe that Titania's infatuation for Bottom is all purity." — E. W. LATIMER.

"Faery elves,  
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side  
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon  
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth  
Wheels her pale course : they, on their mirth and dance  
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear."

MILTON'S *Paradise Lost*, I. 781-787.

2. **amiable**. Meaning what here ?

**coy**. Meaning what as a verb ?

11. What weapons ?

Is Bottom's observation of nature accurate ? What does he want of a "red-hipp'd humble-bee" ?

13-16. Is Bottom making fun of Monsieur Cobweb ?

19. **neif**. Meaning what ? Cf. :—

"Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif." — 2 *Henry IV.*, II. iv.

20. **leave your courtesies**. Why does little Monsieur Mustardseed bow and bow at a distance, instead of boldly presenting his wee "neif" ? As to Cavalery Cobweb's scratching, see textual notes. How is it that Bottom, who but recently was addressing the fairy courtiers as Good Masters, now uses foreign titles ?

23. **I must to the barber's**. Halliwell notes "the exquisite humour of this dialogue, Bottom's discovery of his long hairs, and the singular dexterity with which his new condition is revealed without the discovery of his own transformation to himself."

25. **ass**. In what sense does Bottom use the term ?

28. **reasonable good ear**. "Schmidt remarks that weavers were supposed to be good singers, and particularly given to singing psalms, being most of them Calvinists and refugees from the Netherlands. Cf. 'Twelfth Night,' II. iii. 61 : 'a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver ;' '1 Henry IV.,' II. iv. 147 : 'I would I were a weaver ; I could sing psalms or anything.'" — ROLFE.

29. **the tongs and the bones**.



"In the original sketches of Inigo Jones, preserved in the library of the Duke of Devonshire, are two figures illustrative of the rural music here alluded to. 'Knackers' is written by Inigo Jones under the first figure, and 'Tonges and Key' under the second; the 'knackers' were usually made of bone or hard wood, and were played between the fingers, in the same way as we still hear them every day among boys in the streets, and it is a very ancient and popular kind of music; the 'tongs' were struck by the 'key,' and in this way the discordant sounds were produced that were so grateful to the ear of the entranced Weaver."—PLANCHÉ.

33. a bottle of hay. A truss of hay.

"It is also a suggestion of the subtlest humor when Titania summons her fairies to wait upon Bottom; for the fact is that the soul's airy and nimble fancies are constantly detailed to serve the donkeyism of this world. 'Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.' Divine gifts stick musk-roses in his sleek, smooth head. The world is a peg that keeps all spiritual being tethered. John Watt agonises to teach this *vis inertiae* to drag itself by the car-load; Palissy starves for twenty years to enamel its platter; Franklin charms its house against thunder; Raphael contributes halos to glorify its ignorance of divinity; all the poets gather for its beguilement, hop in its walk, and gambol before it, scratch its head, bring honey-bags, and light its farthing dip at glow-worms' eyes. Bottom's want of insight is circled round by fulness of insight, his clumsiness by dexterity. In matter of eating, he really prefers provender; 'good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.' But how shrewdly Bottom manages this holding of genius to his service! He knows how to send it to be Oriental with the blossoms and the sweets, giving it the characteristic counsel not to fret itself too much in the action."—J. WEISS.

40. How shall we reconcile this with the fairy dimensions of Titania?

42. "The question, reduced to its simplest terms, is: Are there here two plants referred to, or only one? If there are two plants, then either one or both of them bears a name which belonged to the common speech of Shakespeare's day, and which we can now discover only by a resort to literature, an unsure authority when it deals with the popular names of wild flowers. To me it makes little difference what specific flower Titania calls the 'woodbine;' she means herself by it just as she designates the repulsive Bottom with two fairies

busy scratching his head, under the name of that sweet, lovely flower, the honeysuckle ; and as these two distinct vines entwist each other, so will she wind him in her arms." — FURNESS.

46-75. **sweet sight.** Sincere or ironical ?

**hateful fool.** Oberon's especial disgust at Bottom is natural enough.  
**orient.** Meaning what ?

Scan verses 64 and 74.

Is the Fairy King an evenly good poet ? What is the most fanciful passage here ? What is the most memorable line ? What careless repetition of an epithet ? Has Oberon any reason to boast of his magnanimity ? Could exception be taken to any of the words in Skottowe's criticism ? "Knowledge, we have been gravely told, is power, and the animating truth is exemplified by the issue of the contest between Oberon and Titania ; his majesty's acquaintance with the secret virtues of herbs and flowers compels the wayward queen to yield what neither love nor duty could force from her."

**my bower in Fairy-land.**

"A house made all of Mother of Pearl ;

An Ivory Tennis-court.

A Nutmeg Parlour.

A Sapphire dining-room.

A Ginger Hall.

Chambers of Agate.

Kitchens all of Chrystal.

O admirable ! this is it for certain !

The Jacks are Gold.

The Spits are Spanish-needles.

Then there be walks,

Of Amber.

Curious Orchards.

That bear as well in Winter as in Summer."

RANDOLPH'S *Amyntas*.

78. It is extremely doubtful whether Oberon ever replied to this question.

81. Has the Fairy Queen more command over music than the Fairy King ?

86. Compare with the use of supernatural music in "The Tempest."

85-92. **rock the ground.** "Like a cradle." — WRIGHT.

Note the fairy fashion of clinging to a rhyme. Compare III. i., 164-174.

## 94. the morning lark.

"Shed no tear! O shed no tear!  
 The flower will bloom another year.  
 Weep no more! O weep no more!  
 Young buds sleep in the root's white core.  
 Dry your eyes! O dry your eyes!  
 For I was taught in Paradise  
 To ease my breast of melodies —  
 Shed no tear."

KEATS.

95. sad. Sober, as opposed to the sounds of fairy revelry.

99-102. But does Oberon answer?

**Exeunt fairies.**

"So when the sun in bed,  
 Curtained with cloudy red,  
 Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,  
 The flocking shadows pale  
 Troop to the infernal jail;  
 Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;  
 And the yellow-skirted fays  
 Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze."

MILTON'S *Hymn on the Nativity*.

**Enter Theseus.** Chaucer had already given Theseus the reputation of a keen hunter.

"This mene I now by mighty Theseus  
 That for to honte is so desirous,  
 And namely the grete hart in May,  
 That in his bed ther daweth him no day,  
 That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde  
 With hont and horn, and houndes him byside.  
 For in his hontyng hath he such delyt,  
 That it is al his joye and appetyt  
 To been himself the grete hertes bane,  
 For after Mars he serveth now Dyane."

CHAUCER'S *Knights Tale*.

104. observation. "Observance to a morn of May."

105. vaward. Meaning what?

106-107. "Even Titian never made a hunting-piece of a *gusto* so fresh and lusty, and so near the first ages of the world, as this." — HAZLITT.

For the scansion see textual notes.

112-114. "According to Pliny (VIII. 83) there were neither bears nor boars in the island. We may therefore leave the natural history to adjust itself, as well as the chronology which brings Cadmus with Hercules and Hippolyta into the hunting-field together." — WRIGHT.

115. **chiding.** Meaning what ?

119. What is the emphasis ?

The hounds of Sparta were famous for speed and keenness of scent.

120. **So flew'd, so sanded.** "Having the same large hanging chaps and the same sandy colour." — ROLFE.

122. **dew-lapp'd.** Meaning what ?

123. **match'd in mouth like bells.** Cf.: —

"If you would have your kennell for sweetnesse of cry, then you must compound it of some large dogges, that have deepe solemne mouthes, and are swift in spending, which must, as it were, beare the base in the consort, then a double number of roaring, and loud ringing mouthes, which must beare the counter tenour, then some hollow, plaine, sweete mouthes, which must beare the meane or middle part ; and soe with these three parts of musicke you shall make your cry perfect." — MARKHAM's *Country Contentments*.

"Sir Roger, being at present too old for fox-hunting, to keep himself in action, has disposed of his beagles, and got a pack of stop hounds. What these want in speed, he endeavours to make amends for by the deepness of their mouths and the variety of their notes, which are suited in such manner to each other, that the whole cry makes up a complete concert. He is so nice in this particular, that a gentleman having made him a present of a very fine hound the other day, the knight returned it by the servant with a great many expressions of civility ; but desired him to tell his master that the dog he had sent was indeed a most excellent bass, but that, at present, he only wanted a counter tenour." — ADDISON.

"Dametas, were thine eares ever at a more musicall banquet ? How the hounds mouthes, like bells, are tuned one under another ! Life o' slothfulness ! the speed of the cry outran my sense of hearing."

DAY's *Ile of Guls*.

Compare Shakespeare's description of the hounds with his earlier description of a horse.

What is the difference in descriptive method ?

And which makes the more vivid picture ?

"Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,  
 Broad breast, full eye, small head, and nostril wide,  
 High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,  
 Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide :  
 Look, what a horse should have he did not lack,  
 Save a proud rider on so proud a back."

SHAKESPEARE'S *Venus and Adonis*.

131. Why should he wonder ? He apparently had neither attempted any guard over his daughter nor noticed her absence. Theseus, too, judging from the explanation he offers with royal confidence, counts it nothing remarkable that a woman with so grave a doom impending over her should go a-Maying.

132-133.

"Trip and go ! heave and ho !  
 Up and down, to and fro,  
 From the town to the grove,  
 Two and two, let us rove  
 A-maying, a-playing :  
 Love hath no gainsaying,  
 So merrily trip and go !"—NASH.

138. wake them.

"Fly hence, shadows, that do keep  
 Watchful sorrows charmed in sleep !  
 Tho' the eyes be overtaken,  
 Yet the heart doth ever waken  
 Thoughts, chained up in busy snares  
 Of continual woes and cares :  
 Love and griefs are so exprest  
 As they rather sigh than rest.  
 Fly hence, shadows, that do keep  
 Watchful sorrows charmed in sleep !"—FORD.

139. Good morrow.

"Pack, clouds, away, and welcome, day !  
 With night we banish sorrow.  
 Sweet air, blow soft ; mount, lark, aloft  
 To give my love good morrow.  
 Wings from the wind to please her mind,  
 Notes from the lark I'll borrow :  
 Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,  
 To give my love good morrow.  
 To give my love good morrow,  
 Notes from them all I'll borrow."—HEYWOOD.

**Saint Valentine.** What is amiss in the Duke's chronology ?

141. **stand up.** What posture have the lovers taken ? In each case, why ?

150-153. Does Lysander tell the truth from bewilderment or natural frankness ?

154-159. Why the repetitions ?

163. **fancy.** Meaning what ?

164. **I wot not by what power.**

"It is worth while to observe how frequently our poet has this kind of unpleasing effect — this dissonant consonance of repeated similar sound — where the word 'wot' occurs ; only to observe that it accords well with the puzzled impression conveyed by the phrase itself."

COWDEN-CLARKES.

166. For the scansion see textual notes.

169. Not an overwhelming quantity, judging by the past.

174-176. "Cupid, pardon what is past,  
And forgive our sins at last !  
Then we will be coy no more,  
But thy deity adore."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

188. Scan the verse.

191-192. It is obvious that the comparison is not between Demetrius and a jewel, — unless, perhaps, an opal, — but between the finding of Demetrius and the finding of a jewel. Helena's sense of ownership is yet insecure. Dazed with delight, she doubts her own good fortune. Like the finder of a jewel, she is not sure but that a claimant for her treasure may at any moment appear.

193. For the scansion see textual notes.

202. **Heigh-ho.** Signifying what ?

209. **patch'd fool.** "I have met with a remarkable proof of the supposed connexion between the term **patch**, applied to a fool, and the garb such a character sometimes wore, in a Flemish picture of the sixteenth century. In this picture, which represents a grand *al fresco* entertainment of the description given to Queen Elizabeth during her 'Progresses,' there is a procession of masquers and mummings, led by a fool or jester, whose dress is covered with many-coloured coarse patches from head to heel." — STAUNTON.

210-213. Cf. : —

"I, Pegg Pudding, promise thee, William Cricket,  
That I'll hold thee for mine own dear lilly,  
While I have a head in mine eye, and a face on my nose,

A mouth in my tongue, and all that a woman should have,  
From the crown of my foot, to the soal of my head."

*Wily Beguiled.*

213-214. It is a thousand pities that Peter Quince did not comply with this suggestion.

218. **after death.** See textual notes.

What is the most humorous feature of this speech? Was Bottom, during his enchantment, aware that he wore an ass-head? Was Bottom's language at all dignified by the influence of the fairy bower? Does he seem, by comparison with Titania's flower-crowned donkey, especially rude and clownish now?

## SCENE II.

3-4. Is this prompt despair in accordance with Starveling's character? "Starveling's 'transported' means Snout's 'translated,' which means our transformed.'" — FURNESS.

9. **the best wit.** How does Bottom's wit, in fact, compare with that of his fellows?

11-12. Is Quince probably right as to Bottom's person and voice?

13-14. **paramour.** Is Quince too intellectual to blunder on a word? Is it inappropriate that the young and slender Flute should be scandalized and eager to set the manager right?

15-18. How is it well that Snug the Joiner should report the weddings?

**had gone forward.** Meaning what?

**made men.** Meaning what?

19-24. Is there anything magnanimous in Flute's emotion?

**sixpence a day.**

"Preston acted a part in John Ritwise's play of 'Dido' before Queen Elizabeth, at Cambridge, in 1564; and the Queen was so well pleased that she bestowed on him a pension of *twenty* pounds a year, which is little more than *a shilling a day*." — STEEVENS.

"Sixpence sterling, in Shakespeare's time, was equal to about eighty-seven and a half cents now — no mean gratuitous addition to the daily wages of a weaver during life." — WHITE.

26. **hearts.** Meaning what? Why this blustering entrance?

27. **courageous.** "It is not worth while to guess what Quince intended to say. He used the first long word that occurred to him, without reference to its meaning; a practice which is not yet altogether extinct." — WRIGHT.

29-35. What is the accompanying stage action ?

36-37. **good strings to your beards.** Explain.

**new ribbons to your pumps.** Explain.

39. **preferred.** Recommended to the Duke's notice.

44-45. "One part of Bottom's character is easily understood, and is often well acted. Among his own companions he is the cock of the walk." — MAGINN.

"We never lose the cock-a-whoop vein in Bottom's character." — COWDEN-CLARKE.

#### ACT V. — SCENE I.

"The fifth act, like the *finale* of a finely-wrought composition, placidly resumes the theme which was announced at its commencement, and simply blends with it the counter-theme with which it has been intricately worked up during the body of the piece. The poet ends the fairy freaks which have harassed the human mortals through this dream, by turning the tormentors into benefactors, and bringing them into the house to bless the place and the children born of the marriages celebrated on that night. After the grotesque fun and broad humor of the interlude, the dream resumes its fanciful and graceful form, and fades upon the mind, a troop of shadowy figures, singing benisons." — WHITE.

2-3. "In the attitude of Theseus towards the supernatural there is something essentially modern. . . . And we feel at once how the introduction of such an element enhances the power of the earlier views ; the courteous, kindly, man-of-the-world scepticism somehow brings out the sphere of magic against which it sets the shadow of its demand. The belief of the peasant is emphasised and defined, while it is also intensified by what we feel the inadequate confutation of the prince." — JULIA WEDGWOOD.

4. **seething.** Meaning what ? Cf. "Would any but these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather?" — *Winter's Tale*, III. iii. 64.

5-6 **apprehend. . . . comprehends.** "That slightly catch at, as it were, or conceive the idea of more than reason can ever fully grasp or contain." — WRIGHT.

Cf. the use of these words in lines 19 and 20 below.

8. **compact.** Firmly fashioned.



11. **brow of Egypt.** Gypsy's brow. Cf. Faustus's apostrophe to the vision of Helen : —

" Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,  
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?"

MARLOWE'S *Faustus*, Scene XIV.

2-22. This great utterance by Theseus — perhaps, after all, the central poem of the play — is to my reading so marred by the anticlimax of the last two lines that I must still doubt their Shaksperian authorship. The Cowden-Clarkes claim that the function of this unhappy couplet is to bring the conversation back from abstract discussion to the concrete case in hand. But what has a bear to do with the adventures of the enchanted night? To what faculty in man does Theseus attribute "these antique fables" and "these fairy toys"? When he groups "lovers and madmen," is he not himself a lover? What distinction is apparent between the love of Theseus and the love, or loves, of Lysander and Demetrius? Does Theseus hold in higher esteem "shaping fantasies" or "cool reason"? Wherein is his description of the poet true and beautiful? Does Theseus voice Shakspeare's estimate of poetry?

"It is a delightful example of Shakspeare's impartiality that he can represent Theseus with so much genuine enthusiasm. Mr. Matthew Arnold has named our aristocrats with their hardy, efficient manners, their addiction to field sports, and their hatred of ideas, 'the Barbarians.' Theseus is a splendid and gracious aristocrat, perhaps not without a touch of the Barbarian in him. He would have found Hamlet a wholly unintelligible person, who, in possession of his own thoughts, could be contented in a nutshell. When Shakspeare wrote the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' in which, with little dramatic propriety, the Duke of Milan celebrates 'the force of heaven-bred poesy,' we may reasonably suppose that the poet might not have been quite just to one who was indifferent to art. But now his self-mastery has increased, and therefore with unfeigned satisfaction he presents Theseus, the master of the world, who, having beauty and heroic strength in actual possession, does not need to summon them to occupy his imagination — the great chieftain to whom art is a very small concern of life, fit for a leisure hour between battle and battle."

DOWDEN'S *Mind and Art of Shakspeare*.

26. **constancy.** Consistency.

27. **admirable.** Meaning what here ?

28. Hippolyta is right, but Theseus does not take the trouble to discover it. When she falls to logic, he lightly changes the subject.

29-31. Which is the more graceful, — Theseus' greeting or Ly-sander's response ?

34. **after-supper.** "On ordinary occasions the gentlemen of Shakespeare's age appear to have dined about eleven o'clock, and then to have retired either to a garden-house or other suitable apartment and enjoyed their *rere-banquet* or dessert. Supper was usually served between five and six ; and this, like the dinner, was frequently followed by a collation consisting of fruits and sweetmeats, called the *rere-supper*." — STAUNTON.

39. **abridgement.** Meaning what ?

40-41. Why are these two lines so melodious ?

42. **brief.** Meaning what ? Cf. : —

"This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels,  
I am possessed of." — *Antony and Cleopatra*, V. ii. 133-139.

44-60. See Textual Notes.

**The battle with the Centaurs.** From the twelfth book of Ovid's "Metamorphoses."

**The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals.** From the eleventh book of Ovid's "Metamorphoses." Cf. : —

"What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,  
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,  
When by the rout that made the hideous roar  
His gory visage down the stream was sent,  
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?"

MILTON'S *Lycidas*.

**The thrice-three Muses mourning.** Note the alliteration throughout the title. "Warton suggested 'that Shakespeare here, perhaps, alluded to Spenser's poem, entitled "The Tears of the Muses," on the neglect and contempt of learning. This piece first appeared in quarto with others, 1591.' It was supposed by Knight that the death of Greene may be here referred to, which took place in 1592." — WRIGHT.

On verse 59 see Textual Notes.

It is noteworthy that Theseus passes by battle-song, tragic play, and literary satire, and fixes his choice, without consulting his

bride, on what to him is farce, whatever it is to the "hard-handed" actors.

74. **unbreath'd.** Unpractised.

79-80. "'Intents' here, as the subject of the two verbs 'stretch'd' and 'conn'd,' is used both for endeavour and for the object of endeavour, by a license which other writers than Shakespeare have assumed." — WHITE.

82-83. What constitutes the beauty here ?

84-90. Might it have been courteous in "mighty Theseus" to let Hippolyta choose her own bridal masque ? How does he meet her protest ? And what, in fact, is Hippolyta's real objection to the proposed play ?

91-92. See Textual Notes.

93. Scan the verse.

93-105. "An allusion, I think, to what happened at Warwick, where the recorder, being to address the Queen, was so confounded by the dignity of her presence as to be unable to proceed with his speech. I think it was in Nichols's 'Progresses of Queen Elizabeth' that I read this circumstance, and I have also read that her Majesty was very well pleased when such a thing happened." — BLAKEWAY.

106. **Prologue.** "In the earlier period of our drama the prologue-speaker was either the author in person or his representative. . . . From the Prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Woman Hater,' 1607, we learn that it was, even at that date, customary for the person who delivered that portion of the performance to be furnished with a garland of bay, as well as with a black velvet cloak." — COLLIER.

107. **Let him approach.** We may believe that Master Peter Quince, in his poet's garland and scholar's cloak, is badly frightened.

"Present not yourself on the stage (especially at a new play) until the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor in his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hee's upon point to enter." — DEKKER's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609.

"Doe you not know that I am the Prologue ? Do you not see this long black velvet cloke upon my backe ? Have you not sounded thrice ? Do I not looke pale as fearing to bee out in my speech ? Nay, have I not all the signes of a Prologue about me ?" — HEYWOOD's *Four Prentises of London*, 1615.

108-117. If Master Quince had stood upon points, how would the Prologue read ?

Cf. Ralph's letter to Dame Custance.— *Ralph Roister Doister*, 1553, III. ii.

119-120. How is Lysander's figure in keeping for him ?

122-124. How is Hippolyta's figure in keeping for her ?

**recorder.** "Recorders were wind-instruments of different sizes and tones, usually played in sets of six." Cf. "Govern these vent-ages with your fingers and thumb." — *Hamlet*, III. ii. 372.

127-151. What characters in the original cast have dropped out ? Who takes the part of Wall ? Who of Lion ? Who of Moonshine ?

How are we to account for the improvement in the Prologue's second speech ?

In this first quatrain, what obvious devices for rhyme ?

**lime.** See Textual Notes.

For the stanza (139-141) see Textual Notes.

What does Shakespeare ridicule here ?

Select the best absurdities of the speech.

155-164. What does the movement of the verse indicate Tom Snout's style of delivery to be ?

**sinister.** Meaning what here ? and why used ?

167. **partition.** Perhaps an academic pun. "I believe the passage should be read, This is the wittiest **partition** that ever I heard in discourse. Alluding to the many stupid *partitions* in the argumentative writings of the time." — FARMER.

170-181. Poor Pyramus, with all his vehement exclamation and apostrophe, his rant and roar, is yet a lover at whom Demetrius and Lysander have no right to laugh. "When these gentlemen consider Pyramus a bad lover, they forget that they had previously been no better themselves ; they had then declaimed about love as unreasonably as here Pyramus and Thisbe. Like the latter, they were separated from their happiness by a wall which was no wall but a delusion, they drew daggers which were as harmless as those of Pyramus, and were, in spite of all their efforts, no better than the mechanics, that is to say, they were the means of making others laugh, the elves and ourselves. Nay, Puck makes the maddest game of these good citizens, for Bottom is more comfortable in the enchanted wood than they." — SCHOLL.

182. **sensible.** Meaning what here ? Cf. "I would your cambric were sensible as your finger." — *Coriolanus*, I. iii. 95.

184-187. How is Bottom true to his character here ?

191. **How is this for climax ?**  
193. **Has Bottom been taken with this verbal disorder before ?**  
196. **Lilmander.** Leander.  
197. **Helen.** Hero.  
198. **Shafalus.** Cephalus.  
**Procrus.** Procris.  
206. **mural.** See Textual Notes.  
209. **hear without warning.** "Walls have ears," and therefore Wall, having learned from the dialogue between Pyramus and Thisbe that his part is discharged, coolly walks away.  
210-211. **Is Hippolyta lacking in a sense of humor ?**  
Is the sense of humor supposed to be uppermost in a bride ?  
212-213. In this deep-toned utterance, what feeling of the poet's own is let slip, and what thought of the dramatist's and actor's art ? The tolerance of Theseus is rooted in what ?  
214-215. What is Hippolyta's tone in answer ?  
216-218. What change in the mood of Theseus ?  
219. And one of these ladies has been the Queen of the Amazons.  
224. **A lion-fell.** A lion-skin. See Textual Notes.  
230. What is the bad pun of Demetrius ? It is to be hoped that the jocular efforts of Demetrius and Lysander filled Helena and Hermia with delighted admiration.  
239. Scan the verse. The unconscious jest of poor Robin's beginning lies in the fact that Elizabethan lanterns were made of horn.  
249. Demetrius, adding to his former ill repute the odium of a punster, is quibbling again. "To be in snuff" is an old phrase signifying to be angry.  
256. The timid tailor's embarrassment at the Duke's criticism and the mirth of the gentles makes him forget his lines.  
257. Starveling rises to the occasion at last, though his delivery is perhaps curt and sulky. This is not the only instance where patrician discourtesy has bred plebeian rudeness.  
258. **The Man-in-the-Moon.** According to one legend, this personage was Isaac, bearing the wood for his own sacrifice ; according to another, Cain, carrying the most worthless product of the soil, thorns, to lay upon the altar ; and according to a third, the man who, for gathering sticks upon the Sabbath day, was stoned to death by the children of Israel. (*Numbers*, xv. 32-36.)

"Next after him come lady Cynthia,

And on her brest a chorle painted ful even  
 Bering a bushe of thornis on his bake,  
 Which for his theft might clime no ner the heven."

*The Testament of Cresseide.*

It is only the dog that is left unaccounted for.

267-268. A gracious touch of amends, in keeping with womanly character, to poor derided Moonshine.

269. *mous'd*. Meaning what?

272-275. What peculiarities of Bottom are reflected in this quatrain?

276-287. "A part to tear a cat in, to make all split."

**thread and thrum**. "An expression borrowed from weaving; the **thread** being the substance of the warp; the **thrum**, the small tuft beyond, where it is tied." — NARES.

The Cowden-Clarks have shown that Shakespeare is familiar with the technical terms not only of weaving, but of other industries, as cutlery and inlaying; the sports of falconry, hawking, hunting, archery, wrestling, fencing, tilting, bowling, tennis, gaming, and bear-baiting; the sterner pursuits of gunnery, soldiery, horsemanship, and seamanship; and the fine arts of music and painting; while he uses with no less ease the especial vocabularies of heraldry and medicine, court, church, bar, and university.

290. Is Hippolyta ironical?

298-299. "Lest our author [Peter Quince?] should seem chargeable with an inefficient rhyme, it ought to be remembered that the broad pronunciation now almost peculiar to the Scotch, was anciently current in England. Throughout the old copies of Shakespeare's plays, **tattered** is always spelt **tottered**." — STEEVENS.

304. Halliwell thinks **tongue** "too absurd to be humorous." Doubtless Hippolyta would agree with him.

307. The very worst pun yet, if **die** is meant to suggest **duo**; but probably the reference is to the spotted dice.

311-312. Perhaps, after all, the pun of Theseus surpasses the rest in badness.

313-314. How is this criticism characteristic of Hippolyta?

325-348. Notice the country imagery in this nonsense and the suggestions appropriate to the weaver. Cf. line 286 above.

Many wise commentators have gone into poetic partnership with Peter Quince on stanza 331-332, suggesting as improvements :—

"These lily brows,  
This cherry nose,"

and

"This lily lip,  
This cherry tip."

shore. See grammatical notes.

Compare the interlude as acted with the interlude as planned and rehearsed.

352-353. What characteristic touch of Bottom is here ?

354. **Bergomask.** "A rustic dance as performed by the peasants of Bergomasco, a Venetian province, whose clownish manners were imitated by all the Italian buffoons." — NARES.

356-362. What change of tone in Theseus's answer ? Why ?

363. What is the effect of this sudden change from prose to blank verse ?

371-390. Upon this speech of Puck, Coleridge has commented : "Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity ! So far it is Greek ;—but then add, O ! what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation of English fancy ! In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these thirty lines, or half so rich or imaginative. They form a speckless diamond."

Enumerate the successive pictures and suggestions. Were there lions and wolves in the Athenian forest, or is it in girdling the globe that Puck has encountered these ?

What alternating alliteration in the second quatrain ?

Cf. :—

"'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn." — *Hamlet*, III. ii. 353-354.

For the pronunciation of Hecate, scan the verse. Is this the classic pronunciation ?

**triple.** Luna, Cynthia, Phoebe in heaven ; Diana on earth ; Hecate, or Persephone, in hell. Ben Jonson, in his apostrophe to this multiform deity as Cynthia, ascribes to her the emblems and qualities of Diana. The "silver chair" or chariot was drawn by two steeds, one black as night and one white as dawn.

" Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
 Seated in thy silver chair,  
 State in wonted manner keep :  
 Hesperus entreats thy light,  
 Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
 And thy crystal shining quiver ;  
 Give unto the flying hart  
 Space to breathe, how short soever :  
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
 Goddess excellently bright."

#### behind the door.

That is, let us hope, from behind the door ; although it has been suggested that "in large old houses where the doors of halls and galleries are thrown backward, and seldom or never shut," Puck's procedure would be nothing uncommon if he should, indeed, merely sweep up dust-heaps in these convenient shelters. But it is incredible that the goblin who "would many times walke in the night with a broome on his shoulder," should be so uncleanly. Neatness was a cardinal point with the fairies and especially with their queen, better known by the name of Mab than Titania : —

" This is Mab, the mistress fairy,  
 That doth nightly rob the dairy,  
 And can hurt or help the churning  
 (As she please) without discerning.  
 She that pinches country wenches,  
 If they rub not clean their benches,  
 And with sharper nails remembers  
 When they rake not up their embers ;  
 But, if so they chance to feast her,  
 In a shoe she drops a tester."

BEN JONSON'S *Althorpe Masque*.

" Where fires thou find'st unrak'd and hearths unswept,  
 There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry ;  
 Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttary."

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, V. v. 48-50.

" A pleasant meade,  
 Where faires often did their measures treade,  
 Which in the meadow made such circles greene,  
 As if with garlands it had crowned beene.  
 Within one of these rounds was to be seene



A hillock rise, where oft the fairie queene  
 At twy-light sate, and did command her elves,  
 To pinch those maids that had not swept their shelves.  
 And further, if by maiden's over-sight,  
 Within doores water were not brought at night,  
 Or if they spred no table, set no bread,  
 They should have nips from toe unto the head;  
 And for the maid that had perform'd each thing,  
 She in the water-pail bade leave a ring."

BROWNE'S *Pastorals*.

*Enter the King and Queen of Fairies, with all their Train.*

" 'Twas not an earthly pageant :  
 Those who looked upon the sight  
 Passing all human glory,  
 Saw not the yellow moon,  
 Saw not the mortal scene,  
 Heard not the night-wind's rush,  
 Heard not an earthly sound,  
 Saw but the fairy pageant,  
 Heard but the heavenly strains  
 That filled the lonely dwelling."

SHELLEY'S *Queen Mab*.

391-394. See textual notes.

395-400. If, as Johnson supposes, two songs have been lost here, lovers of poetry can hardly be comforted.

Note, in all this fairy music, the brevity and lightness of the words, especially where dancing is called for. What is the effect of rhyme and rhythm at the very close of Oberon's last utterance (421-422) ?

412. **prodigious.** Unnatural.

413. Scan the verse.

415. Field-dew is the holy water of the fairies.

423. **shadows.** What reminiscence does the line carry ?

See 212 below.

432. Scan the verse.

433. **the serpent's tongue.** Hisses.

437. **Give me your hands.** Plaudits.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

## ENGLISH LITERATURE.

---

Of our popular list of classics the editor of the Christian Union recently said: "*We cannot speak too highly of the Students' Series of English Classics.*" There are nearly thirty books now out and in preparation, and it is only necessary to read the list of our editors to gain an intelligent idea of the character of the work done. We do not add to this series for the sake of increasing the list, but we shall make the same careful selection of authors that are to come as we have in those announced. Any book announced in this series will be worth the attention of an instructor in English Literature.

---

### **Painter's Introduction to English Literature, including several Classical Works. With Notes.**

By PROFESSOR F. V. N. PAINTER, of Roanoke College, Va. Cloth. Pages xviii+628. Introduction and mailing price, \$1.25.

### **Morgan's English and American Literature.**

By HORACE H. MORGAN, LL.D., formerly of St. Louis High School. A practical working text-book for schools and colleges. Pages viii+261. Introduction price, \$1.00.

### **Introduction to the Study of English Literature.**

In Six Lectures. By PROFESSOR GEORGE C. S. SOUTHWORTH. Cloth. Pages 194. Introduction price, 75 cents.

### **The Students' Series of English Classics.**

*PRICES REDUCED.* To furnish the educational public with well-edited editions of those authors used in, or required for admission to, many of the colleges, the Publishers announce this new series. *The following books are now ready*, and others are in preparation. *They are uniformly bound in cloth*, furnished at a *comparatively low price*, and Students of Literature should buy such texts that after use in the class room will be found valuable for the library.

## LITERATURE.

<i>Coleridge's Ancient Mariner</i> . . . . .	25	cents
<i>A Ballad Book</i> . . . . .	50	"
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> . . . . .	35	"
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by KATHARINE LEE BATES, Wellesley College.		
<i>Matthew Arnold's Sohrab and Rustum</i> . . . . .	25	"
<i>Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration</i> . . . . .	25	"
<i>Milton's L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Comus, and Lycidas</i> . . . . .	25	"
Edited by LOUISE MANNING HODGKINS, formerly Professor of English Literature, Wellesley College.		
<i>Introduction to the Writings of John Ruskin</i> . . . . .	50	"
<i>Macaulay's Essay on Lord Clive</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by VIDA D. SCUDDER, Wellesley College.		
<i>George Eliot's Silas Marner</i> . . . . .	35	"
<i>Scott's Marmion</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by MARY HARRIOTT NORRIS, Professor, New York.		
<i>Sir Roger de Coverley Papers from The Spectator</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by A. S. ROE, Worcester, Mass.		
<i>Macaulay's Second Essay on the Earl of Chatham</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by W. W. CURTIS, High School, Pawtucket, R. I.		
<i>Johnson's History of Rasselas</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by FRED N. SCOTT, University of Michigan.		
<i>Macaulay's Essays on Milton and Addison</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by JAMES CHALMERS, Professor of Literature.		
<i>Carlyle's Diamond Necklace</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by W. A. MOZIER, High School, Ottawa, Ill.		
<i>Joan of Arc, and other selections from De Quincey</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by HENRY H. BELFIELD, Chicago Manual Training School.		
<i>Selections from Washington Irving</i> . . . . .	50	"
Edited by ISAAC THOMAS, High School, New Haven, Conn.		
<i>Goldsmith's Traveller and Deserted Village</i> . . . . .	25	"
Edited by W. F. GREGORY, High School, Hartford, Conn.		
<i>Burke's Speech on Conciliation with America</i> . . . . .	35	"
Edited by L. DUPONT SYLE, University of California.		

## LITERATURE.

---

*Tennyson's Elaine* . . . . . 25 cents.

Edited by FANNIE MORE McCAULEY, Instructor, Winchester  
School, Baltimore.

*Macaulay's Life of Samuel Johnson* . . . . . 25 "

Edited by GAMALIEL BRADFORD, Jr., Instructor in English  
Literature, Wellesley and Boston.

*Scott's Lady of the Lake* . . . . . 35 "

Edited by JAMES ARTHUR TUFTS, Phillips Exeter Academy.

The following volumes are in preparation :

GOLDSMITH'S VICAR OF WAKEFIELD. Edited by J. G. RIGGS,  
School Superintendent, Plattsburg, N. Y.

MILTON'S PARADISE LOST, BOOKS I AND II. Edited by ALBERT  
S. COOK, Yale University.

DE QUINCEY'S THE FLIGHT OF A TARTAR TRIBE. Edited by  
FRANK T. BAKER, Teachers' College, New York City.

CARLYLE'S ESSAY ON BURNS. Edited by WILLIAM K. WICKES,  
High School, Syracuse, New York.

TENNYSON'S THE PRINCESS. Edited by HENRY W. BOYNTON,  
Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.

MACAULAY'S LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME. Edited by D. D. PRATT,  
High School, Portsmouth, Ohio.

DRYDEN'S PALAMON AND ARCITE. Edited by W. F. GREGORY,  
High School, Hartford, Ct.

POPE'S ILIAD, BOOKS I, VI, XXII, XXIV. Edited by WARWICK  
J. PRICE, St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H.

We cannot speak too highly of the STUDENTS' SERIES OF ENGLISH  
CLASSICS. — *The Christian Union*.

---

Correspondence Invited.

LEACH, SHEWELL, & SANBORN,  
BOSTON. NEW YORK. CHICAGO.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....





This book should be returned to  
the Library on or before the last date  
stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred  
by retaining it beyond the specified  
time.

Please return promptly.



